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SPECIAL IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW WITH STAN (THE MAN) LEE AND THE WORLD'S TALLEST EDITOR-IN-CHIEF BIG JIM SHOOTER!
STAN'S SOAPBOX
RON LAIME

THE NEW DEFENDERS®

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Memo to: **Stan Lee**
From: **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE**
Re: Recommended reading

Shortly before this issue of **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE**, which features an extra-long interview with you and Big **Jim Shooter** went to press, we learned that you had recently underwent minor surgery and will be spending the next few weeks recovering at home. We also got word that you are now complaining that you're bored!

Well, Stan, you lamented in this issue's interview that you just couldn't find the time in your busy schedule to read all your favorite Marvel comics. So along with our best wishes for a speedy recovery we'll suggest that you use this newfound free time to catch up on your reading. It's guaranteed to lift you out of the doldrums and as one of our favorite people used to say, you never know when there's going to be a quiz!

JIM SALICRUP

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MARVEL COMING ATTRACTIONS

Red Sonya by Howard Chaykin.

Red Sonja © 1983 by the Red Sonja Corp.

Here is a complete checklist of what's happening in all Marvel titles bearing a February cover date. A **Limited Series** is a title which will only run for a specific number of issues. A **Graphic Novel** is a trade paperback-sized edition. A **Direct Sales** title is available only at selected outlets. **Shipping Date** refers to the date the comics leave the printer. A word to the wise: please tell your comics specialty shop owner which titles you wish to buy as soon as possible! Marvel Comics sell out so fast that unless your comics shop owner knows which titles you want, you may not get them!

Titles shipping October 4, on sale October 25:

THE THING #8 – The ever-lovin' blue-eyed **Thing** is in trouble again – victim of an ancient Egyptian curse! And not your run-of-the-mill magic spell, either – but one which changes him... forever? "Ancient Evenings, Ancient Pain" is written by **John Byrne**, penciled by **Ron Wilson**, and inked by **Hilary Barta**.

DAREDEVIL #203 – **Matt Murdock** is called to the courtroom to defend an old enemy – not seen since **DAREDEVIL #1**! But not before **Daredevil** must overcome a *new* enemy – a sneaky and sinister trickster named **The Trump**! Suspenseful drama cover to cover, written by **Steve Grant** and penciled by **Geof Isherwood**!

NEW MUTANTS #12 – The mysterious **Magma** decides whether or not to join **the New Mutants**! But more important – will she gain control of her powers in time to prevent herself from destroying Rio de Janeiro? Written by **Chris Claremont**, penciled by **Sal Buscema**, and inked by **Tom Mandrake**.

KA-ZAR #30 – Pangea War II? Betcha didn't even know there was a *first* one! Now that **Ka-Zar** and **Shanna** are married, there's still war in Pangea, and **Ka-Zar** and **Shanna** are two of its first prisoners! And with the grudge that **the Pterons** have against our Jungle Lord, you *know* he's in big trouble! A tale of a strange honeymoon, written by **Michael Carlin**, pencil breakdowns by **Mary Wilshire** and finishes by **Armando Gil**. Direct Sales Only, .75¢. On high quality Mando paper.

RED SONJA (Limited Series) #4 – One man can unite the Hyborean Age into a world of peace and prosperity. Unfortunately, he's the man that **Red Sonja** is out to kill! Find out *why* in "Lassusar Must Die," the conclusion to this exciting Limited Series by writer **Tom DeFalco**, penciler **Mary Wilshire**, and inker **Nestor Redondo**! 48 pp. $1.00.

THE FALCON (Limited Series) #4 – He's beaten the cops! He's beaten **Captain America**! And now he's after the President! He's **Electro**! Only **the Falcon** is left to fight him – but **Falcon's** got his hands full! A climax of unparalleled drama to the year's most intriguing Limited Series, written by **Jim Owsley**, penciled by **Marc Bright**, and inked by **Mike Gustovich**!

KULL THE CONQUEROR #4 – With a plague rampant in Velusia, no one can leave the King's castle!

So our cast of characters treats **Kull** to a quartet of timeless tales – and you're treated to some of the most awesome artwork of all! Brule's Tales is penciled by **Ernie Chan** and inked by **Joe Rubinstein** – Redondo's Tale is penciled, inked, and colored by **John Bolton** – Kathulo's Tale is penciled and inked by **Bill Sienkiewicz** – and Borna's Tale is penciled by **Butch Guice**! All written by **Alan Zelenetz**. 48 pp. No ads. High quality Mando paper. $1.00

HERCULES (Limited Series) #1 – Back because you demanded it! An all new Limited Series starring the Son of Zeus, written and drawn by **Bob Layton**! **Hercules** fights – **Hercules** frolics – **Hercules** confronts his own mortality for the first time in his immortal existence! Plus **Skyppi the Skrull**! Don't miss "My Love is Green!"

CONAN ANNUAL #8 – Guest starring **King Kull**! A beautiful girl must stop her twin brother from plundering and deadly evil – but when she kills him, he becomes more powerful! The only way for her to triumph is to die herself – by **Conan's** hand! But he's in love with her! "Dark Night of the White Queen" is a time-spanning once-a-year epic written by **Jim Owsley** and penciled by **Val Mayerik**. 48 pp. $1.00.

THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE #13 – "The Book of the Dead – Part I" catalogs dead and disabled characters; facts and figures on everyone from **Air-Walker** to **Man-Wolf**, including the original **Captain Marvel, Dracula, Ghost Rider**, and **Death** herself! Featuring artwork by **John Byrne, Walt Simonson,** and **Jim Starlin** among others! $1.00.

Titles shipping October 11, on sale November 1:

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #249 – The title is "Secrets!" **The Hobgoblin** is blackmailing New York City's most prominent citizens – including **Harry Osborn** and **J. Jonah Jameson**! What's he got on them? And how does **the Kingpin** fit in? Written by **Roger Stern** penciled by **John Romita, Jr.**, and inked by **Dan Green.**

CAPTAIN AMERICA #290 – **Cap's** life becomes more complicated than ever, when the son of **Baron Zemo** returns! Plus – the first hints of a grand scheme against **Cap** that he may *never* recover from! And who is **Mother Superior**? Read "Echoes" by **J.M. DeMatteis**, inked by **John Beatty**, and featuring the much-raved about penciling of **Ron Frenz**!

THOR #340 – Having both survived last issue's battle, **Thor** and **Beta Ray Bill** *team-up* – to battle deadly demons in deep space! Can they save **Beta Ray's** fleet in time? You won't believe the staggering *changes* in **Thor** himself that come at the conclusion of this mind-bending saga! And we won't even *tell* you what happens to **Sif**! Written, penciled and inked by **Walt Simonson.**

THE FURTHER ADVENTURES OF INDIANA JONES #14 – See **Indy** and **Marion** save their museum from... its kindly curator? There's more here than meets the eye! A trunkful of old bones couldn't pose a threat...

Hercules, Mr. Koppalo and the mysterious **Shasha**, as penciled by **Bob Layton.**

or could it? Also see **Marion** in her new job as museum publicist – if she survives! Written by **David Michelinie**, penciled by **David Mazzuchelli** and **Vince Colletta.**

SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #96 – **Conan** can save the innocent girl and sorcerer from "The Ape-Bat of Marmet Tarn" – until the **Ape-Bat** reveals who he truly is! Meanwhile, **The Devourer of Souls** is back – and he's got company! Written by **Michael Fleisher**, penciled by **John Buscema**, inked by **Nestor Redondo**. $1.50.

DOCTOR STRANGE #63 – Meet **Akira Nitobe**! He's more than a master of the martial art of Kiai Jutsu – is he more than a match for **Dr. Strange**? What does our sorcerer supreme do when he cannot defeat his foe by mystic power alone? Special once-in-a-lifetime tale written, penciled and inked by **Carl Potts** – featuring full color cover by **Potts**, too!

U.S. 1 (Limited Series) #8 – At long last – the secret identity of **Midnight** revealed – or is it? And what new dangers await our truckin' heroes before they can unravel the mystery behind **the Highwayman**? It's all in this superslab adventure written by **Al Milgrom**, penciled by **Frank Springer**, inked by **Mike Esposito.**

G.I. JOE action!

X-MEN/MICRONAUTS (Limited Series) #2 – The X-Men arrive in the Microverse – only to find it already under the treacherous control of... **the Entity**! Can they succeed where **the Micronauts** failed? "Into the Abyss" is written by **Bill Mantlo** and **Chris Claremont**, penciled by **Butch Guice**, and inked by **Bob Wiacek.**

ILLYANA AND STORM (Limited Series) #3 – "School Days!" And the lessons are in the Dark Arts! The third part of this Limited Series details **Illyana's** apprenticeship to the sorcerer **Belasco** – and that's nothing compared to her final confrontation with **Storm**! Written by **Chris Claremont**, penciled by **John Buscema**, and inked by **Tom Palmer.**

Titles shipping October 18, on sale November 8:

INCREDIBLE HULK #292 – Dragon Man returns! The **Circus of Crime**, too! Plus – the nemesis which haunts all mankind begins to transform **the Hulk's** tragic life into a nigthmare! "Dragon Night" is written by **Bill Mantlo** and penciled by **Sal Buscema.**

AVENGERS #240 – When ex-Avengers **Tigra** calls Earth's Mightiest Heroes to San Francisco to investigate the disappearance of **Spider-Woman**, the outcome is hardly what you'd expect! "The Dark Angel of Jessica Drew" is written by **Roger Stern**, penciled by **Al Milgrom** and inked by **Joe Sinnott.**

CONAN #155 – You thought **John Buscema** only *penciled* the most spectacular sword-and-sorcery epics of all, didn'tcha? Well, **Big John** *plotted* as well as drew "The Anger of Conan," and the story is nothing less than awesome!

MARVEL TALES #160 – "The Clown and his Masters of Menace!" reprinted from the classic **SPIDER-MAN #22** by **Stan Lee** and **Steve Ditko**! Featuring **the Circus of Crime!**

X-MEN #178 – Colossus was their first victim – who's next? **The Brotherhood of Evil Mutants** is still stalking **Rogue** – and it's anyone's guess what happens when they find her! Plus – more secrets about **Mystique** revealed, with a hint or two about **Nightcrawler's** origins! Written by **Chris Claremont**, penciled by **John Romita, Jr.**

ROM #51 – Rom goes public! But alerting the media to the presence of **the Dire Wraiths** on Earth has some bizarre consequences – not all of them good! "War," written by **Bill Mantlo**, penciled by **Sal Buscema** and inked by **Ian Akin** and **Brian Garvey**, begins a new direction for the steadfast, shining spaceknight!

POWER MAN/IRON FIST #102 – Luke Cage, from the streets of New York City. **Danny Rand**, raised in the mystic city of K'un L'un. Heroes for hire facing the most insidious menace this side of the Internal Revenue Service! He's called **Doombringer**! Written by **Archie Goodwin** and penciled by **Greg Larocque.**

G.I. JOE #20 – When "Clutch Goes Home," he's in for some surprises! But so is **Cobra**! And when the confrontation comes, the quiet suburbs of New Jersey will never be the same! Written by **Steven Grant**, penciled by **Geof Isherwood**, inked by **Jon D'Agostino.**

Spider-Woman by **Frank Miller** and **Bob Wiacek.**

G.I. JOE © 1983 by Hasbro Industries, Inc.

LAST MINUTE ADDITIONS...

Shipping **October 4** and on sale **October 25** is **TALES OF ASGARD** #1, a special deluxe reprint edition of the classic **Stan Lee** and **Jack Kirby** stories! Printed on Mando paper. 48 pp. $1.25.

Shipping **October 11** and on sale **November 1** is **MARVEL FANFARE SPECIAL EDITION** #1. Printed on high quality Hudson paper. Direct Sales Only. 48 pp. $2.00.

Shipping **October 18** and on sale **November 8** is **THE SUPER BOXERS GRAPHIC NOVEL** #9, a stunning science fiction blockbuster about futuristic warriors scripted by **John Byrne**, penciled by **Ron Wilson** and inked by **Armando Gil**. With a sensational full-color cover painting by **Bill Sienkiewicz** and an equally dazzling back cover by **Marc Bright**. $5.95.

Shipping **October 25** and on sale **November 15** is **MICRONAUTS SPECIAL EDITION** #3, re-presenting more early issues of the **Bill Mantlo** and **Michael Golden** masterworks. Cover by **Butch Guice** and **Joe Rubinstein**. Direct Sales Only. 48 pp. $2.00.

And **CAPTAIN AMERICA SPECIAL EDITION** #1, which features reprints of the great **Stan Lee** and **Jim Steranko** issues of the red, white and blue Avenger! Printed on Baxter paper. 48 pp. $2.00.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE #11 – The one magazine where you can find out more about Marvel than anywhere else! With news, reviews, and interviews, New Talent, and hot gossip! Designed for the total Marvelite – and it's still only twenty-five cents!

THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARLVEL UNIVERSE #14 – Nope! This isn't a mistake! For Direct Sales Only, Part II of "The Book of the Dead" will come out *two* weeks after Part I as a special Halloween bonus! The rest of the world will have to wait a full month for the inside facts on everyone from **Marvel Boy** to **Zuras**, including **Moribus, Nighthawk, Nova, Phoenix, Thanos, Warlock**, and many, many, more!

Titles shipping October 25, on sale November 15:

FANTASTIC FOUR #263 – Who dares call himself... "The Messiah?" **The Torch** and **the Thing** find out... but not before they travel to California, where they are greeted by devastating earthquakes! Written, penciled and inked by **John Byrne.**

MARVEL TEAM-UP #138 – **The Sandman** is no longer a villain... but he's got no use for **Spidey** either! What'll happen when they meet? **The Enforcers** and **the Satan Squad** also complicate matters. Written by **Tom DeFalco**, pencils by **Greg Larocque** and inked by **Mike Esposito.**

IRON MAN #179 – As if dangers at home haven't been enough, the Golden Avenger must travel to Cairo! As for what new nemesis awaits him *there* – you'll just have to read it to find out! 'Cause he may not return home alive! Written by **Denny O'Neil**, penciled by **Luke McDonnell**, and inked by **Steve Mitchell.**

PETER PARKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #87 – We all know that the beautiful **Black Cat** loves **Spidey** – but there's a *man* behind the wall-crawler's mask – and there's a shocking *turning point* in that man's career in store! Don't miss "Mistaken Identities," written by **Bill Mantlo**, penciled by **Al Milgrom** and inked by **Jim Mooney!**

DEFENDERS #128 – What is *Project: Sublimate*? Let's just say that 1984 arrives a year early, as the most far-reaching of all **Defenders** sagas draws toward its dramatic conclusion! Written by **J.M. DeMatteis**, and featuring the outstanding penciling of **Alan Kupperberg!**

STAR WARS #80 – What a homecoming! When **Han, Princess Leia** and **Artoo** return to Tatooine to tie up some unfinished business, it's hardly business as usual – when some of Tatooine's deadliest surviving citizens form the welcoming committee! "Jawas of Doom" is written by **Jo Duffy**, penciled by **Ron Frenz**, and inked by **Tom Palmer.**

ALPHA FLIGHT#7 – You've been wondering what it is that makes **Aurora** just a trifle looney! All is revealed in "The Importance of Being Deadly," highlighting **Jeanne-Marie** and her brother **North Star**! And it's not what you'd think! Also featuring the continuing "Origins of Alpha Flight" back-up series, this issue, telling the unknown tale of **Snowbird**! Both stories written, penciled, and inked by **John Byrne.**

COYOTE #5 – It *had* to happen! **Coyote** meets **the Road Runner**! *Meep! Meep!* Written by **Steven Englehart.** On high quality Baxter paper from the Epic comics line. $1.50.

WHAT IF #43 – "What If the Hulk Went Berserk?" In this tale of an alternate reality, **Bruce Banner** fails to save **Rick Jones** from the gamma explosion that creates **the Hulk**! How does this cause **the Hulk** to become a murderous killing machine? Written by **Peter B. Gillis**, penciled by **Ron Wilson.** Guest-starring **the Fantastic Four, Thor** and the *original* **Iron Man**!

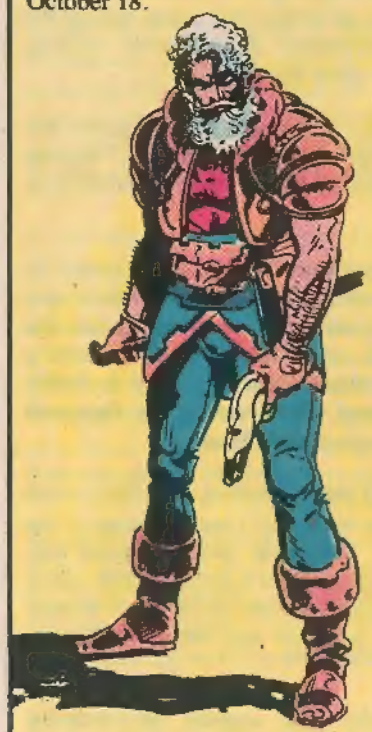
JACK OF HEARTS (Limited Series) #2 – The second great issue of the most requested Limtied Series of the year! "Heart to Heart" shows our power-plagued hero escape Earth and travel to an alien world to find the secret of... himself? What terrible secrets are in store? Written by **Bill Mantlo**, and penciled and inked by **George Freeman.**

Note: The information that appears in "Coming Attractions" is as complete and accurate as we can manage. Occasionally changes are made after the column is put together. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause! ●

Newswatch

There are so many new and interesting projects coming down the pike that we left some out last issue!

First, look for a Limited Series starring **Jack of Hearts**! He's a character who's been adventuring around the Marvel Universe for several years, having spent time training under none other than **the Invincible Iron Man**, and now he's starring in his very own four-part opus! Editor **Bob Budiansky** revealed to **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE** that during this Limites Series, **Jack Hart** will uncover his *true* origins – in a story that brings him face to face with everyone from **SHIELD** to **Marcy Kane** (from the pages of **SPIDER-MAN**) to some strange races of aliens! What could the hidden history of **Jack Of Hearts** have to do with all of these characters? You're in for some shocking surprises from **Bill Mantlo**, writer, and **George Freeman**, artist. The first issue will have a January cover date, shipping September 27, and will be on sale October 18.



A nifty new nemesis for the **Jack of Hearts**, drawn by **George Freeman.**

Finally, we've got a spanking new compendium of classic Marvel team-ups coming out this fall, available at your local bookstore. **MARVEL TEAM-UP THRILLERS** is a trade paperback edition of the greatest super hero team-ups ever. It features **Thor** and **the Silver Surfer** teaming up in "The Good, the Bad, and the Uncanny" by **Stan Lee, John Buscema** and **Sal Buscema** from **SILVER SURFER #4**, **Iron Man** and **Captain America** together in "In Mortal Combat with Captain America" by **Stan Lee, Don Heck** and **Dick Ayers** from **TALES OF SUSPENSE #58**, a pairing of **Spider-Man** and **Red Sonja** titled "The Sword and the She-Devil" by **Chris Claremont, John Byrne** and **Terry Austin** from **MARVEL TEAM-UP #79**, a classic battle with the original **X-Men** versus **the Avengers** by **Stan Lee, Jack Kirby** and **Chic Stone** (called, appropriately enough "Enter the Avengers!" from **X-MEN #9**), a clash between **the Thing** and **the Hulk** called "Cry, Monster" by **Len Wein, Jim Starlin**, and **Joe Sinnott** (from **MARVEL FEATURE #11**), and, last but not least, **Spidey** versus **Daredevil** in "Duel With Daredevil" from **SPIDER-MAN #16** by **Stan Lee** and **Steve Ditko**! That's **MARVEL TEAM-UP THRILLERS** – it's only $4.95, and it features nifty new introductions by **Stan Lee**.

What more could you ask for? ●

BEHIND THE LINES THE MARVEL EDITORS SOUND-OFF

A short story by

LARRY HAMA

The lights are low. He sits in his room waiting for the bustle of day to settle into the quietude of night. He has taught himself to be patient. He bides his time with no outward signs of distress or anxiety. He takes the manuscript from his table, folds it into a small square and secrets it inside his shirt. He allows himself a quick glance around his room, finding strange comfort in the familiar pairs of identical eyes staring back from walls and ceiling. He gives his beard a last tug and slips into the hallway silent as a Kushite thief. The columns and plants afford him partial concealment, but in the end it is his skill alone that must see him through. He slows fluidly as he senses the approach of a guard. He wills himself to become a part of his surroundings. His metabolic rate decreases. His Alpha rhythms straighten into a smooth plane. His aura assumes a relaxed mode. The guard passes, turns a corner and disappears down an adjacent corridor. Instantly the senses regain their edge. The real test is yet to come. He must pass the Lair to gain his objective. His luck holds true. The Lair is vacant tonight. He walks by nonchalantly, still respectful of the Presence and enters the tiny cubicle that is his objective. He seats himself and unfolds his manuscript. His lips move silently as he begins to read and an eerie green glow illuminates his concentrated features. On the crystal in front of him, shining words appear:

ABOMINATION
Real Name: Emil Blonsky
Occupation: Ex-Spy
Marital Status: Single
Powers: The gamma radiation that transformed Blonsky into the Abomination fortified his cellular structure and added several hundred pounds of pure muscle to his body. Thus the Abomination has vast super-human strength...

"Editing" by

AL MILGROM

When I worked, some years ago, as an editor for DC comics my boss Joe Orlando had an observation about what a comics editor does. He told me that in the early days of cartooning (and Joe would certainly remember those) one man generally did the whole job. One man would write the material, would pencil it, letter it, ink it, and, when called for, color it.

Over the years a system evolved in which different individuals would share the load, each doing the job he did fastest and best. In part, this system was used to take advantage of the skills each individual excelled at; in part it evolved because the increasing demands for comic book material and the tightening deadlines these demands brought with them. Joe said that the editor's job was to take the writer, illustrator, calligrapher, delineator, and colorist, and meld them into a single working entity: a cartoonist.

I rather liked the image. So this is what I as a comics editor, try to do: Make a team out of diverse individuals, each working separately, frequently having limited contact with the other creative people with whom they are teamed.

Of course there's more to it than that. Because of the solitary nature of most of the comics freelancers, they work at home or in a studio, frequently by themselves, putting in long hours over typewriter or drawing board without any human contact. Here the editor may serve a valuable social contact. He can act as friend, advisor, confidant and a soft touch when a freelance check is too long in coming through the mails. These roles are balanced by the need to be the freelancer's critic, boss, creative collaborator and deadline watcher.

All in all being an editor is a complex, demanding job that necessitates walking some fine lines and treading some thin ice. It can be exasperating, frustrating, annoying, maddening and downright "disgustipating." But when things are working right: when the deadlines are being met; when the freelancers are happy and doing good work; when the editor and the freelancers have developed a working rapport and the good ideas flow in torrents; and when the editor succeeds in meshing the diverse talents of all those individuals who contribute to the comic, it can be an exciting and rewarding experience and a lot of just plain fun.

"In Your Future..." by

CARL POTTS

At the end of this year, Marvel is going to spring a very unusual new book on you! **THE ALIEN LEGION**. I was going to hold off telling you about it until just before it was due out, but I'm too excited to keep quiet any longer!

What on earth is **THE ALIEN LEGION**? Well, first off it's got nothing to do with Earth. Our little water planet plays no part in this book. It is set thousands of years in the future and takes place in another part of the universe.

These opening lines of the first issue will give you an idea of what to expect:

Footsloggers and Soldiers of Fortune,
Priests and Poets, Killers and Cads –
they fight for a future galarchy,
for cash, a cause, for the thrill of adventure.
Legionaires live rough and they die hard,
tough as tungsten and loyal to the dirty end.

The Legion is a *very* diversified group. Its ranks contain numerous life forms, cultures, diciplines, philosophies and habits. Trying to keep such a crew reigned in is no easy task. That responsibility falls to **Captain Sarigar**... a very odd fellow indeed. He's the one whose head-shot accompanies this column (The one with the blue skin, you *!* !*!). If you think his head is weird, wait 'till you see the rest of him! His body makes his face look absolutely normal!

We've worked hard to figure out the life histories, motivations, interests and abilities of the whole cast. Conflicts arise within the ranks when the ideal of universal fellowship by total integration meets the reality of making all the diversified aliens mesh into a smooth, uniform unit. A **Legionnaire's** worst enemy is often a fellow trooper. Someone he has to work with, depend on, and risk his life with everyday.

The concept of **THE ALIEN LEGION** had been sitting on my shelf for eight years. My drawing time was so tight it did not allow me to get beyond writing up the treatment and designing some of the characters. Finally, I realized I'd probably never have the time to draw it myself, so I started looking for interested parties who would be able to take the concept and run with it. And boy, did I luck out! Popular science fiction and fantasy artist **Frank Cirocco** will now breathe life into the visuals while exuberant writer, **Alan Zelenetz** will script the series. These two talented guys have helped to flesh out the concept and I'm very happy to be working with them.

More information, artwork and interviews with the creative team will be coming your way in a future issue of **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE**. We'll be looking forward to your comments on this title when it hits the stands. Don't disappoint us. ●

STAN LEE AND JIM SHOOTER

Ever since **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE** #1 hit the stands, the two most requested interviews have been with **Stan (the Man) Lee** and **Big Jim Shooter**. by lucky happenstance Stan was in town a month or two ago. In between business meetings, starry-eyed freelancers and celebratory lunches, Stan and Jim managed to squeeze in an hour-long interview, conducted by our very own Assistant Direct Sales Manager, **Peter David**, for **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE** that answers every single question about what Stan's up to, and how Jim's handling the most demanding job in comics, and what the future of Marvel Comics is going to be. And if there are any questions we missed, we're sure you'll let us know!

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE: *People ask 'Is Stan Lee still with Marvel Comics." Are you still with us?*

STAN LEE: Sure! Especially on pay day!

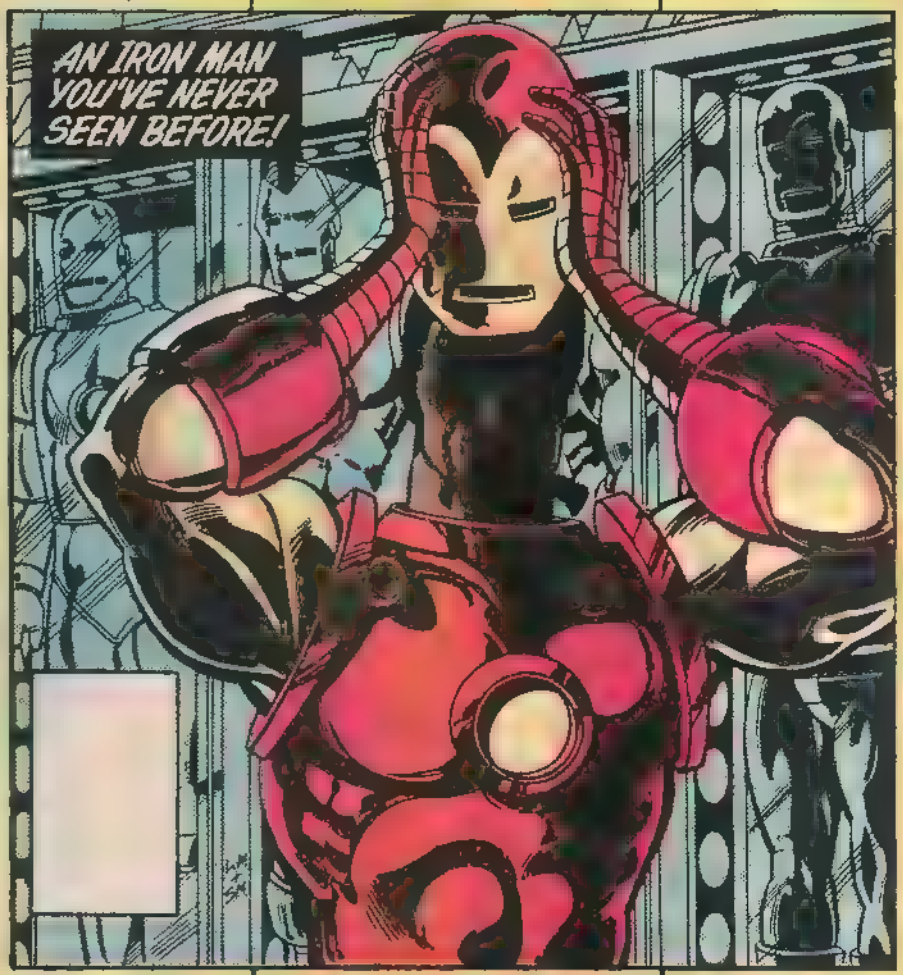
JIM SHOOTER: Whenever we can get our hands on him, yeah.

STAN: Actually I'm not involved in the day-to-day operation anymore but I'm still with the company. I still have the title of Publisher. They still let me walk in the front door when I come to New York and even say "hello" to me occasionally.

MA: *Well, we can tell by that glowing look that you work out in California, as opposed to the pale, haggard look of New Yorkers. What precisely do you do out there?*

STAN: I was hoping you wouldn't ask. Two things: one, we opened up a studio there, an animated studio. We do Saturday Morning cartoons. We also do commercials and TV specials for prime time and so forth. **David DePatie** and I would like to start getting into live action when the time is right. Besides that, I am supposed to be trying to sell television shows based on the Marvel characters or any other characters we can come up with. I spend a great deal of time seeing producers, directors, agents, whatever. I have been incredibly successful in putting together countless deals and have been unbelievably unsuccessful at having them actually reach the screen so far.

Jim Shooter on the other hand, whose job is to turn out comics books and who is not even on the west coast, in his *spare time* has put to-



gether a movie with **George Romero** which will probably hit the screen before anything that I can do.

JIM: A job that Stan has that he didn't mention, is the most important from my point of view. He is still the creative director of the entire company and even though he can't be involved in it day-to-day, if there is anything important going on, we call him. We still send him the covers to look at and so forth, and if there's anything we're doing with the characters that is very important, we get on the phone; or when he comes to town, we talk about what's going on.

MA: *You even touched on that kind of interaction a year ago in the Bullpen Bulletin, describing a phone call you and Stan had wherein he had expressed enthusiasm for the plans for 1983.*

JIM: That particular time there were some rumors going on that we were making radical changes to the Marvel Universe and so forth, and I think Stan got a few letters asking him about this and since he never heard of it, he called me up to ask me.

MA: *According to one fan report, Stan, you had been asked at a convention about that; about plans to kill off every character you ever created, and you said, "No, it's absolutely untrue." As a result, there was a theory that Stan Lee found out about Jim Shooter's Master Plan and said, "No way you are going to kill off one of my characters."*

JIM: No, what really happened was, Stan got these letters saying there is something terrible going on, so he called me up to ask me what terrible things it was that I was doing. I said, well for example, we have a plot going with **IRON MAN** that I like: Tony Stark is going to be leaving **IRON MAN** for a while.

STAN: I loved it.

JIM: And after I told him all of these things that we were doing, he said "That is the best stuff I have ever heard, what are they complaining about?" And I said that these rumors get started and people get upset and then they fantasize that something terrible is going on. They hadn't had a good rumor for a while out there, so they turned things into these catastrophic developments. And when I explained to Stan what we were doing he told me, "I love what you're doing and I want you to go ahead and tell people that." So I did exactly that; I put it in the Bulletin.

MA: *And Stan, have you gotten any further response?*

STAN: No, as a matter of fact I haven't heard anymore about it, so I guess everything is O.K. now.

JIM: Well, The Bullpen Bulletin is the most widely-read page in comics. That's the way you described it in a Bullpen Bulletin way back when And that's true. It is a prime source of communication to the fans.

STAN: You know, the thing that gave me the idea for the Bullpen Bulletin; you wouldn't know this, it's before everybody's time, but years ago there was a milk company called

Sheffield Milk. They and Borden's Milk were the two big milk companies that delivered milk in New York (When peopled used to have milk delivered everyday) and they were very big rivals. Sheffield Milk used to publish a little paper for the customers' kids. It was called **THE WHATSIT**, and they had a little **WHATSIT** club, a little Fan Club. They would run letters and have a little message from the editor of the **WHATSIT**, and all the kids read that and they used to look to see if their names or those of any other kids they knew were mentioned. When we started Marvel Comics, I felt that we should get a page that would have the same appeal that the little **WHATSIT** pages had 50 years ago, because people love reading inside gossip about something that they care about. God knows they care about Marvel, and if they can read what Jim Shooter is doing, and what **John Romita** is doing and **Bill Sienkiewicz**, and so forth – and what they're saying – and what they look like – how they react to each other, etc. *Of course* they are going to read that. They're going to love it.

MA: *Up until that time, people who produced comics were largely faceless creators. Until Marvel Comics established the practice there were no credits given to the creators.*

STAN: Not to the degree that we gave it. Occasionally we had things like **"BATMAN by BOB KANE,"** but that was it. We didn't know who penciled it, wrote or colored it.

JIM: I worked in comics for five years before I got my name on the piece I wrote, and the person who put it there was **Wally Wood**. He put it in the background with his own name.

MA: *Why was there this perception that the people should be anonymous? And what prompted you to counter this with, "Written by Stan Lee, penciled by **Jack Kirby**" and so forth?*

STAN: I don't know why there was that perception, and I really don't think it was planned. I think nobody really thought of it, it never occurred to anybody. Comics in the beginning were considered such an unimportant medium, really. Publishers who owned the companies had very little respect for their own product. And the ones producing them were mainly people who thought of it as a stopgap job until they could do something worthwhile – a means of making a few bucks until they could be discovered in a "real" field. Nobody really thought of it as anything prestigious. Occasionally guys like **Carl Burgos** would sign his name at the start, but people just weren't concerned with credits in those days.

MA: *Now much of this has been covered in the **"Origins of Marvel Comics,"** but I'd like to go over it for the new readers out there. In the days of **FANTASTIC FOUR #1**, the office staff was you and then-production manager, **Sol Brodsky**. That was the whole office. Is that correct?*

STAN: I have a lousy memory, and there may have been a few more people, but I know Sol was one of the definite guys. There was also a girl there, **Flo Steinberg**, my secretary – a fabulous girl.

JIM: She's up here all the time, visiting. She's still fabulous.

STAN: I'm sure there were a lot of other people, but I really can't remember specifically. But we had a very small staff. **Jack Kirby** may have been on the staff, or maybe he was a freelancer, but either way he worked at home. It was just Sol, me, **Artie Simek** the letterer, Flo, and whoever else was around.

MA: *Now, were you reading Marvel at that time, Jim?*

JIM: First Marvel Comic I read was **FANTASTIC FOUR #4**, at a Barber Shop, actually. And that was very interesting, but you couldn't find Marvel comics anywhere back then. They weren't widely distributed. So I kind of forgot about it and then, a short while later, I was in the hospital – a children's ward, of course, and they get tons of comics in a children's ward, and they had lots and lots of Marvel Comics. That's where I started to really get into it. I managed to find a few sources for them and the next year I was working professionally in comics, so then I was able to track them down easily.

MA: *Where did you get your start?*

JIM: Well, I started working at DC. I read DCs when I was a little kid and I got bored with them when I was eight years old. I didn't read other comics until I was twelve, which was when I encountered Marvel. I realized these were different than the comics I used to read. These were **interesting.** I looked at some **SUPERMAN** comics again and they were still boring. So I tried to figure out why Marvel's were good and the other ones weren't. Now, at that particular time my family had a rather desperate need for money, and it occurred to me that somebody got paid for writing these things. I knew I couldn't write as well as Stan. I knew there was no point in sending submissions in to Marvel, because I couldn't compete with stories in **SPIDERMAN** and **FANTASTIC FOUR.** But I thought I could use the same approach that Stan did and maybe sell stories to DC. Obviously, they needed help, so I did exactly that. I found absolutely *the* most boring comic of DC's which was the **LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES.** Later, I found out that strip had been written by some very nice and very professional gentlemen who were actually very capable. However, I also found out that that was the **direction** they were given in those days, editorially. That was largely to blame for the stories being dull. Anyway, I wrote a **LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES** story, as much as I could like the Marvel Comics stories that has more character, more believability, and so forth. I sent it off to DC, I got back a check and became a professional writer! I sold everything I ever wrote.

MA: *Now Stan, when you were writing Marvel Comics, did you sit down and say "This is what comics books have been up to this point and we are going to make them everything that they have not been?"*

STAN: Well, we didn't have super hero books at the time. Primarily we were turning out a lot of monster magazines. **Martin Goodman,** who was the Publisher at the time called me in and said, "You know, Stan, I think that the super heroes are coming back. I was looking at the sales figures for DC's **JUSTICE LEAGUE.** Why don't we do a team of super heroes? They are really selling well." I had worked that way with Martin all the time. He would say to me, "Why don't we do some westerns?" so I turned out 50 westerns.

"Why don't we do funny little animated books?" so I turned out 50 animated books. But by now after all those years I was really ready to quit. I was unhappy and thought I was going nowhere, and my wife said to me "Look, instead of quitting, why don't you do the books the way you'd want to do them. Just get it out of your system, and then quit. For once, do what you want." And Martin really wasn't paying that much attention at the time. So I thought, okay, I'll do a team of super heroes which he wants, but it'll be fun to try to do it a different way. They won't always win at the end, they'll fight amongst themselves, and they'll talk like real people! And that was the **FANTASTIC FOUR.** I wasn't trying to revolutionize comics or anything. I just wanted to get something out of my system and get the hell out of there. But, the book caught on, and we started putting out other books, and I thought, gee, I did it *my* way for once! I'll do it for the other books, too! And that was the whole kaboodle.

MA: *Now at that time really, in the 60's you had three major functions: Writer, Editor, and basically, the company spokesman.*

STAN: And Art Director.

MA: *And Art Director. Did you enjoy one of those functions more than any other, and at which did you think were you the most skilled?*

STAN: I can't answer that, but I think the thing I always enjoyed the least is the writing. I like being with people. I mean, I would love it if you could get stories done while you are talking to people. I hate sitting by a typewriter all by myself in a silent room. I find it the loneliest work in the world. It's a wonderful feeling when the story is finished, when you feel you've come up with a good yarn and you can read it in print. But I hate having to lock myself in a room and write. Again, my wife says she doesn't think I am a real writer at all, because I should love it. I always put it off until the last minute. I hate it while I'm doing it, and I'm overjoyed when I'm done! I enjoy being an Art Director because I love working with artists. I enjoy half of being an Editor because I enjoy talking to writers, but I hate editing the script. I hate changing anything someone else has written. It's like destroying part of another person's life! But I like to work with writers, and discuss stories with them. As for being a spokesman, it just happened because I was the head of the company at the time. I never thought of myself as a spokesman, but I was really the only guy who had the time and the experience for making speeches, or being interviewed over the air or in the newspapers. After a while I became the person to ask for because they knew me and I had been there before.

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FEATURING
"THE THING!"
"MR. FANTASTIC!"
"HUMAN TORCH!"
"INVISIBLE GIRL!"
TOGETHER FOR THE FIRST TIME IN ONE MIGHTY MAGAZINE!
IF I CAN'T TURN INVISIBLE FAST ENOUGH, HOW CAN WE STOP THIS CREATURE, TORCH?
JUST WAIT AND SEE, SISTER! THE FANTASTIC FOUR HAVE ONLY BEGUN TO FIGHT!
THE THREE OF YOU CAN'T DO IT ALONE! IT'S TIME FOR THE THING TO TAKE A HAND!
IT'LL TAKE MORE THAN ROPES TO KEEP A STER FANTASTIC OUT OF ACTION!
The one that started it all!

MA: *Right. Now, Jim, you have virtually the same three functions. You are a Writer, you are an Editor, you are now the company spokesman for Marvel in the 80's.*

JIM: And the Art Director.

STAN: I think you have to be the Art Director if you're the Editor in this business.

MA: *Do you have one task that you prefer over the others, that you think you are the most skillful at?*

JIM: Well, you more or less have to do all those things. I don't think there's any way of separating them. I think that probably the one I am the worst at is the one that Stan is the best at. Stan was always the person who got along with everyone, everyone admired him and respected him and so forth. And I think that I am a perfectly reasonable human being, and I think I am a nice guy and all, however, I think there is a real knack, a real skill to being able to work with people, teach them, even critique their work and so forth, and still have them walk out of your office feeling like a million dollars. That's always been the hardest for me. I really try my best, but sometimes I'm not able to do it well. I am certainly not able to do it as well as I'd like, and...

STAN: I've got to interrupt. Nobody is able to do it as well as they like. Jim, I think you're really downgrading yourself too much, because I think you are exceptionally good at that, and I have heard many glowing things about you from artists and writers who work for you. I think you are much better at it than you think you are.

JIM: Thank you. Anyway that's the part that's, the hardest – you know, the teaching part. It is not necessarily that you know everything and these guys don't know anything and you've got to enlighten them. But, if you are in charge, that means that you have been entrusted with decid-

WHAT IF
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MARVEL COMICS GROUP
ALL NEW!
WHAT IF
AVENGERS
HAD NEVER BEEN?
THOR! GIANT-MAN? WASP! YOU CAN'T QUIT NOW—!
NOT WHILE THE HULK AND SUB-MARINER HAVE UNITED TO DESTROY MANKIND!
A TALE OF TRIUMPH AND TRAGEDY IN THE TITANIC MARVEL TRADITION!

A classic early tale by Jim Shooter.

ing the approach that the company wants to take. No one can walk in knowing what you're thinking. They can't read your mind. So you've got to show them what your plan is, and how they can fit in it and so they can find whether or not they want to fit in it. As I said, I think that's the trickiest, hardest part, and if I have ever done well at it, it is because I am so concerned about it that I try harder than ever at it.

As for the writing and editing, I like writing. I don't mind sitting alone in a room, because if I feel like I've got something going and the adrenalin starts flowing, then I'll be walking around, reading it to myself and acting it out. I'll fiddle with it and I'll have a great time with it. And as far as being the spokesman, I look at it this way: you are the person who is in charge. You are the one people want to talk to. You can't avoid it. And I don't mind. I do it. It's not my favorite thing, but I do it, without agonizing over it. And the art direction/editing I think are hand-in-hand. That's where I agree with Stan. That's the part, the dealing with people, that I like the best, when there is a bunch of guys and we're just talking — talking art, stories and ideas! We just had Bill Sienkeiwiez here. We were just looking at a bunch of his paintings, and his paintings are just great. It was one of the most enjoyable moments I've had this week, just having that guy in here and talking.

Well, we had a situation yesterday, I knew Stan was in the office somewhere. A guy brought in a painting that was great, and I knew Stan likes to see stuff that is great. I thought I would show him this painting. I knew he would like to see it. So, I tracked him down. He was in the middle of an important meeting in company president **Jim Galton's** office. In front of all these hotshot executive people I walked in to the meeting, and said, "I've got to show you this." So they all looked at me kind of funny, and I said, "Look at this," and they all understood why I had interrupted the meeting. Just for that moment, where we can look at a piece of work and appreciate it and talk about it — about how we feel about it, and how we think the fans will feel about it. That's great.

All those pieces of the job go together; you can't avoid any of them. You enjoy the ones that are most enjoyable. You grit your teeth and bear down and just do the ones that are the hardest. But you really enjoy the good parts. You got to be able to do them all.

MA: *What happened Stan, when you first met Jim?*

STAN: I said "Who are you?"

JIM: That's exactly right. I had been working for DC Comics for five years and I kind of reached the end of the rope with them. I really felt like I needed to have a change.

MA: *You'd been writing LEGION—*

JIM: LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES, SUPERMAN, SUPERBOY, SUPERGIRL, CAPTAIN ACTION. I wrote a whole bunch of stuff. So I felt like I needed a change as I said, the whole time I worked for DC Comics it was because I'd admired Marvel Comics and thought I could do some Marvel-type of stuff for DC Comics. Because Marvel already had Stan, they didn't need me, so it was DC or zilch. But, five years later, Marvel Comics had grown a bit, and I really felt that I really could contribute something to Marvel. I really wanted to go where my interest lay. I never really felt at home with DC Comics.

It was 1969, and I lived in Pittsburgh at the time, and one day, for no reason that I can remember I flew to New York to see Stan. I didn't even call first, which was really stupid, because Stan could of been out of town. I called the Marvel Comics office, and I must of sounded very official because they put me through to Stan, which was rare. Stan gets calls by the billions. If they let every call go through he wouldn't do anything but answer the phone. And I very quickly explained to him that I was a writer and I wanted to show him my stuff. Now how many million writers wanted to show him their stuff?

I said, look, I've been writing for DC Comics for five years. I've written **SUPERMAN,** I've written this and that. He said, "Well, I'll give you 15 minutes, okay? But I am really busy; that's all I can give." So I rushed over to Marvel and went to his office and I emerged two and a half hours later with a job.

MA: *And the job was...?*

JIM: The job was "staff writer." They didn't have a position, really. They didn't have any openings. They just made a job for me.

STAN: Because I was very impressed with Jim.

MA: *What was your first impression with Jim when he walked in?*

STAN: There have been a few guys that I have met in my career that, when I met them I said, Hey, you just don't let a guy like this get away, I liked the things he said, the ideas he had. And it seems to me I also saw some of his sketches and stick figure drawings and they were good. I said, the guy can do anything. So that was it. I hired him.

JIM: For three weeks I was getting acclemated and trying to catch up on all the books I hadn't managed to read. My trouble back then was that I had just turned 18 and I had just moved from Pittsburgh, and I couldn't find a place to live. Everything in the city of New York was too expensive for me to buy. It was a very traumatic move from Pittsburgh to New York. I didn't have any friends or relatives, and I didn't have any place to live. I was living at the YMCA. Marvel was wonderful. The rest of the experience was terrible. I just couldn't handle it, and I said, "Is there any way I could live in Pittsburgh and work for you?" In those days there wasn't and so I said, well, I am sorry, I have to go. I just can't find a place to live in New York! I just can't get settled. So I worked at Marvel for about 3 weeks and then I moved back to Pittsburgh. I thought that was it. I thought, gee, I worked there *three weeks* and left. They'll never speak to me again. They all went out of their way to get me a job, and I couldn't hack it. At that time, of course, having left DC, I figured I wasn't welcome there either.

MA: *You hadn't had a staff job at DC?*

JIM: No, but they had filled every waking moment with work. I mean, I was a regular writer. So, anyway, I figured I was done in comics. That was it. So, I puttered around in Pittsburgh. I tried a little bit of advertising and a whole bunch of less glamorous jobs. Then, after a couple of years, I got a phone call from someone who worked at Marvel. Well, actually I got a call from a fan who interviewed me and found out that I wasn't working at Marvel Comics, that I always liked Marvel Comics but I thought that the comic book people didn't like me anymore. He called someone he knew at Marvel, and that person called me and said what are you doing? Are you crazy? Come on up here. We can use you. I flew up to New York and I met with everybody and they offered me more work than I could stand. Both companies did, as a matter of fact. The trouble was that DC offered me all the series I used to write, and Marvel offered me series recently created that I'd never heard of.

MA: *You hadn't read a comic in all that time?*

JIM: I hadn't read a comic in all those years. It was a painful experience to read a comic, then, because I felt like maybe that part of my life was over. I didn't even buy my own comics which were still being printed and coming out on the stands.

STAN: I can understand that.

JIM: So, I was really out of touch. Marvel offered me **MAN-WOLF** and, I think, a couple of other things I never heard of, and it looked like I'd have to read 700 back issues before I could start writing. Meanwhile, DC was offering me **SUPERMAN** and all these strips that I was familiar with. I thought maybe I should work for them for awhile and get my feet under me — a big mistake. I worked for them for awhile and had exactly the same experience as I had the first time. I regretted my decision from the moment I made it. I was so unhappy. I felt so out of touch. *Everybody* wanted to be at Marvel, and I wanted to be at Marvel. And, I thought, how could I have done this to myself? I stuck it out for about two years and I was on the verge of giving up comics again. And then I got a phone call from the Editor-in-Chief of Marvel who hired me to be an editor on the staff. I always thought that I would make a good editor. I walk around the world editing. As I go along I say, well, that building's a little too short. That sign, they misspelled a word. So I thought I would like to be an editor. And they offered me a chance to be an editor. So I came here. I moved to New York. I was older this time and I was prepared to deal with the Big Apple. I found a place to live and got settled and was OK. I did the editor's job for two years, and then they had run out of warm bodies for the Editor-In-Chief job. They'd used up everybody. It was time to scrape the bottom of the barrel, so they picked me.

STAN: That's not exactly true. You know I always felt Jim would be great for that job. Of course, I must admit when he was an assistant, I always thought that he would be great for that job, too! I remember one thing which has nothing to do with what you're talking about. Jim was a real irrational son of a...., one time he got mad, either at me or one of the editors he was working for or something. But I remember, he said, "I am gonna quit". He said to me, "I might as well go back to driving a truck." I said to him,"Well, Jim, would you please hang in there. I promise you will be glad you stayed. Things will work out okay. Don't leave, this is a good place for you and you're good for the company." I don't remember the exact words, but something to that effect. But I always remember him saying he could always go and drive a truck.

JIM: Yeah, that's true, but at any rate Stan took me to lunch one day and offered me the Editor-in-Chief job. So I took it.

STAN: Sure, I'd do anything to get a lunch date!

JIM: That was five years ago, I'm still here.

MA: *Stan, were you already out in California at that time? What was your title?*

STAN: I think I must have still been an active publisher then.

JIM: Yeah, that's right. And you were here the first couple of years as I was Editor-in-Chief.

STAN: I've only been in California for about two and a half to three years.

JIM: It was a real good thing you were here the first two years I was Editor-in-Chief. I remember the time we went to press with a Super Special and it had some material in it which the movie people decided at the last minute they wanted to change. We had already printed 350,000 copies

and we had to throw them away and start again. If Stan hadn't been here I don't know what we would have done. I had visions of Jim Galton saying, "Well, this is gonna cost us tens of thousands of dollars, what are you gonna do about it". I figured I'd say "Well, here, (digs in his pockets) I have about 50 bucks I can give you." Things like that would've been a lot tougher without you around.

STAN: What he means is that when we found out that we had to throw away 350,000 copies if I hadn't been here he would have had to throw them all away himself.

JIM: (Laughs)

STAN: Luckily, I was standing next to him so we threw them away twice as fast.

JIM: The thing is, there were times when there were big decisions to make and stuff like that, and a lot of times I really had no idea what to do. Fortunately Stan was here, so I just wandered into his office, and said, I don't know want to do.

STAN: I tossed a coin, and he thought I was being profound.

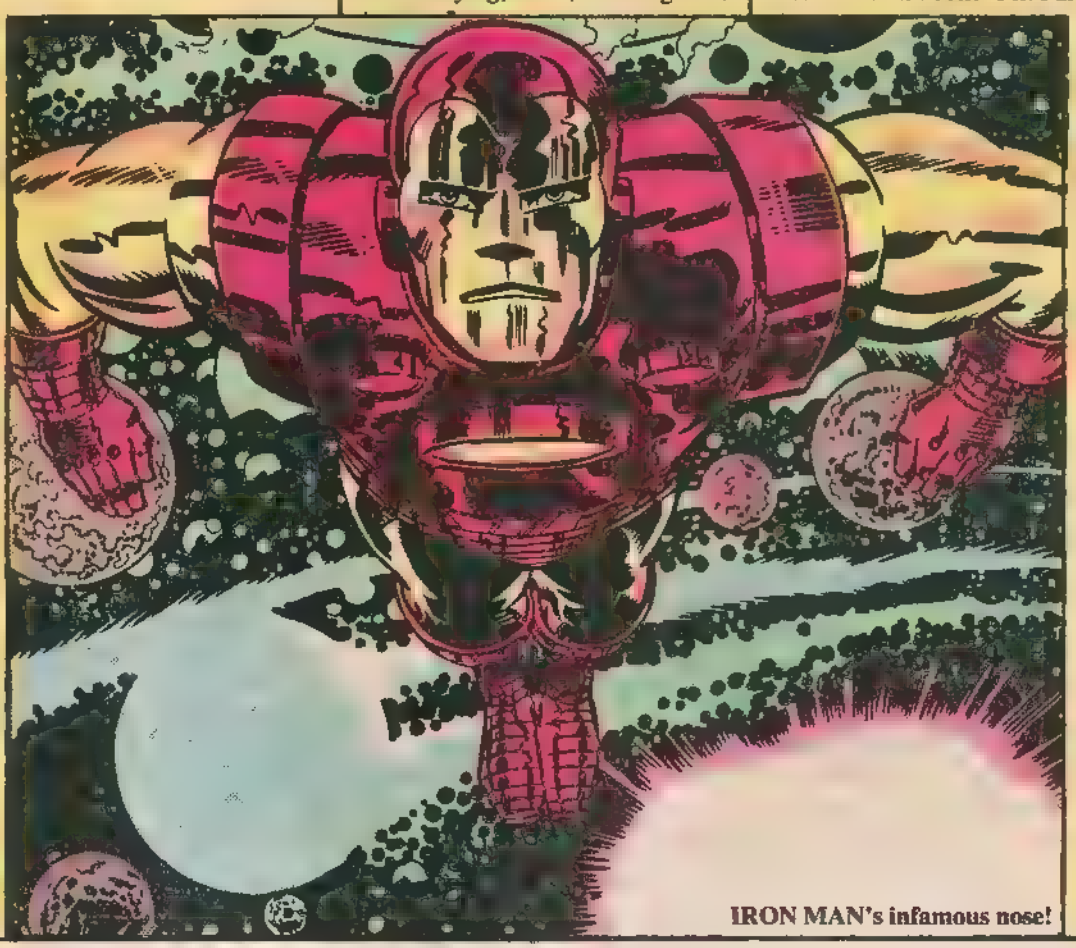
MA: *I seem to recall some sort of flack over IRON MAN's nose.*

JIM: That was before my time. You know, Stan had an incredible reputation. I think people were always in awe of him and if he would say anything, just some little remark in passing, you know it would become *law*. I remember one time there was a situation — this was before I was Editor-in-Chief — where Stan looked at a picture of **IRON MAN** and said, "Shouldn't he have a nose?" I know exactly what he meant. What he meant was the guy had drawn the mask so flat that it looked like there couldn't be a nose under there. All he wanted was a little room for the guy to have a nose, right? Immediately they went out and drew a triangular nose on **IRON MAN**'s costume and it was there for a year or so. Then later Stan saw this picture of **IRON MAN** with this triangular nose on his face and he said, "What's this, why is this here?" And they said, "Oh, you don't want that?" "Well, it looks kind of strange, doesn't it?" They took *that* as an edict, too — "No nose on **IRON MAN.**" Then, they all walked around saying, "Gee, he changes his mind a lot."

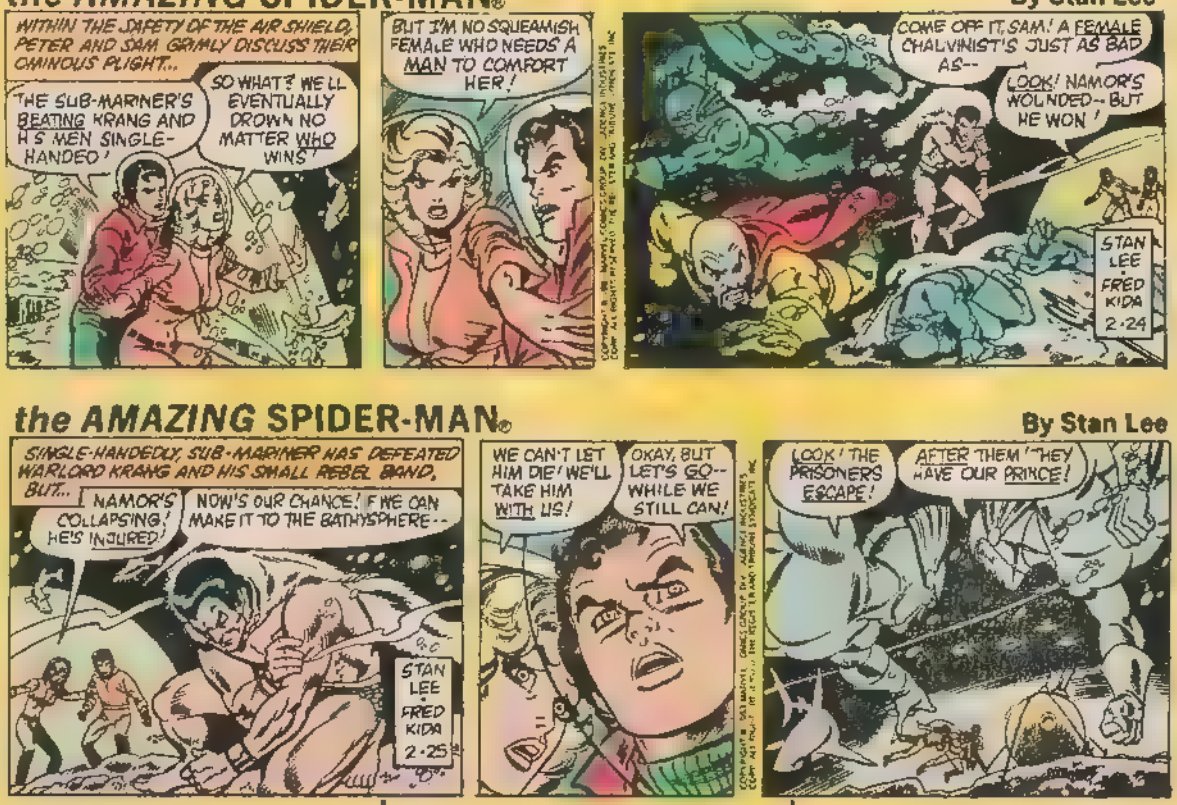
STAN: He doesn't know what he wants to do.

ALL: (Laughter)

JIM: I knew what had happened. I couldn't believe I was **seeing** it happen. One more story to that effect. It happened the first week that I was Editor-in-Chief. The fellow who colors our covers, **George Roussos** – who's a genius, who's great – one time apparently had shown Stan a cover which he had colored green. And Stan said, "Never color a cover green." Well, Stan, maybe once in a while in his life lapses into hyperbole. What he *meant* was that he didn't like that particular cover. Okay, so I had a cover on my desk, and I said, "Hey, George, color this green." "No," he says, "Stan won't like it." I said "No, it'll be all right. Color it green." We had an argument about it. He didn't want to do it because Stan had once told him never to color a cover green. I insisted — so, George finally did it under protest. He told me, "I want it to be clear with Stan that I had nothing to do with this." I couldn't believe it. I thought,



IRON MAN's infamous nose!


the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®
By Stan Lee
WITHIN THE SAFETY OF THE AIR SHIELD, PETER AND SAM GRIMLY DISCUSS THEIR ominous PLIGHT...
THE SUB-MARINER'S BEATING KRANG AND H S MEN SINGLE-HANDED!
SO WHAT? WE'LL EVENTUALLY DROWN NO MATTER WHO WINS!
BUT I'M NO SQUEAMISH FEMALE WHO NEEDS A MAN TO COMFORT HER!
COME OFF IT, SAM! A FEMALE CHAUVINIST'S JUST AS BAD AS--
LOOK! NAMOR'S WOUNDED-- BUT HE WON!
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the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®
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SINGLE-HANDEDLY, SUB-MARINER HAS DEFEATED WARLORD KRANG AND HIS SMALL REBEL BAND, BUT...
NAMOR'S COLLAPSING! HE'S INJURED!
NOW'S OUR CHANCE! IF WE CAN MAKE IT TO THE BATHYSPHERE--
STAN LEE FRED KIDA 2-25
WE CAN'T LET HIM DIE! WE'LL TAKE HIM WITH US!
OKAY, BUT LET'S GO-- WHILE WE STILL CAN!
LOOK! THE PRISONERS ESCAPE!
AFTER THEM! THEY HAVE OUR PRINCE!

does he think we're gonna have him shot at dawn or something? I took the cover into Stan and asked, what do you think of this? He looked at it and said, "It's great!" I took it out and told George "He said it's great.

STAN: I probably really hadn't said to him, never color the cover green, because it's not the type of dogmatic thing that I'm inclined to say. I think what I must have said was, and I'm guessing, I probably said, "Never color this type of cover green," or "Never color it green if you happen to have a dark blue color next to it, because it'll look too muddy."

MA: *You might have just said, "Green, bleah."*

JIM: I can't imagine you saying that either, because I worked closely with you for about 5 years and I never heard you say any absolutes this or that. It was always, "What do you think, Jim," or "I don't know, maybe it would work better this way," or something like that. I wasn't around for whatever set this off, but something had convinced them that you didn't like the color green, and George is no dummy. He is, as I say, a genius. If you just leave him alone he's the best colorist in the world. But he had heard that green was not acceptable, and, like I said, we almost had an argument over it. But, as I showed it to Stan, it was fine. There was no rule. It's almost as if people were so in awe of Stan that if he said anything, they would interpret it as law.

MA: *What is it about Stan that puts people so in awe?*

JIM: He knows what he's doing. He's good. If you're right a lot, people get the idea that you know what you're doing. I guess they take that seriously.

STAN: One thing that always bothered me was, the word had gotten around that I wanted stuff drawn in a certain style, or I wanted everybody to draw like **Kirby**, or like **Romita**, or like whomever. And that was probably the one main thing that I *didn't* want in this company. I always felt it would be the greatest thing in the world if everybody drew differently. I liked **Colan**, because his work is so different. I liked **Ditko**, because his was different, and so forth. What I probably used to say, and I don't know if Jim runs into the same problem of having things misinterpreted, but what I probably would say would be, "Hey, that shot is too weak. If you want a guy punching something, look at the way Kirby does it. Let's try and get that kind of force.' Or, "This shot is too dull. Even if it's a man walking in the street, look at the way Gene Colan does it. It looks interesting even if there's no action." But I loved the idea of different artists with different styles. Yet, so often I would read in the fan magazines that the one thing wrong with Marvel is they try to put everybody in the same mold, and I never really understood how people got that impression.

JIM: Well a lot of these misinterpretations apparently took place.

MA: *Yeah, it still happens.*

JIM: People think that there's some kind of rule about something, when there isn't. But that's why I say communicating with people is the most difficult thing, because you know everyone is going to interpret things. Everybody does and you always want to be careful not to leave them with the wrong impression, especially if you're in a situation where,

say, you're Editor-in-Chief and therefore what you say is somehow more important.

MA: *Do you think that you, Jim, have now reached the same plateau in that what you said automatically becomes graven in stone?*

JIM: I think that's one thing that I was forewarned about, because I saw it happen with Stan. And I have gone through great trouble to make sure that people understand that I'm not making any rules. So, I think it doesn't happen as much around here today as it did in the old days. Because Stan, when he was here, he was busy. He was always going off to colleges lecturing, and if you got Stan for a short period of time, that was great. So, I have a bit of advantage there, but I do see some of that happening. Like in the fan magazines, just as Stan said, with the fan magazines where they keep saying that there was a particular style you have to have. There's such a good Fan Press, such a pervasive Fan Press that if you order tuna for lunch it's in the Fan Press tomorrow.

STAN: I gotta mention one thing that I think is great about what Jim is doing. The one rule that I used to consider an inflexible, important rule, was not to have any rules, as long as you didn't violate the boundaries of good taste. To me, anything goes that's different, that's surprising, that hasn't been done before. Which is hard to do. It's hard to find something that hasn't been done before.

MA: *Stan, do you still read Marvel Comics?*

STAN: I must say that I don't really have the time to thoroughly read all of the books that are sent from New York. They're shipped to me every month, and I try to thumb through as many as possible. The covers that I've been looking at and the story ideas that I've seen, and the little bits of innovation and surprises and unexpected things that come up are just terrific. I mean, I just have to feel that Jim is doing the greatest job in the world, because I know how difficult it is. I tried to do it for years. I know how hard it is to take a line of books that's been in business for so many years, and give a feeling of newness, and freshness, and surprises to the titles each and every month. I mean, that's genius. And Marvel is doing that. I think our books have a fresher, younger, more exciting feeling of novelty and innovation than they have had for the longest time. And I think that's the reason they're so popular today and doing so well. I only mention that again because I think it's obvious that Jim certainly must be of the opinion that the only rule is not to have rules.

MA: *Are there any particular books that come out that you look forward to next?*

STAN: Not really. As with anybody else, one month a certain cover will attract me. The next month it'll be the cover of a different book. I never know which will be the most exciting. It's always a surprise. But I tell you, in every batch of books there are always a lot of them that I say, wow, if only I had time to read this! I know damn well if I were a comic reader I would buy 'em cause they're good.

MA: *Earlier on Jim mentioned that at one time he had felt that he had put comic books behind him and it pained him to look at comic books, and you said, "Well, I understand that feeling".*

STAN: That is important. Yes, you're absolutely right. If you've left a place, and you feel that you're finished with it and you'll never come back to it, it could almost be unpleasant looking at what you've done. You force yourself to try not to care about it. Sure, I can understand that.

MA: *But you don't feel that you've put Marvel Comics aside?*

STAN: Oh, no, I just scan the books the way I do, instead of reading each one thoroughly because I physically don't have the time. I would love to read them.

MA: *People are constantly asking what new incarnation the Marvel characters are going to be having on television?*

STAN: Well, it's really hard to answer that one because the decision isn't mine. I'm trying to get as many of them on the screen in different forms as I can. But it depends whether the motion picture distributors will finance them. And it depends on whether the networks will order them for television. So I never know. The only thing definite that I can tell you now is that Columbia Pictures is presently preparing a **HUMAN TORCH** motion picture.

MA: *That will be live action?*

STAN: Yes. A live-action motion picture. Nelvana is also working on **THE X-MEN** as a live-action motion picture. I haven't seen that myself, yet.

JIM: Well, it's their first treatment. (Holds up proposed treatment of film).

STAN: Have you read it?

JIM: Yeah, I've read it.

STAN: Is it good?

JIM: I'm having a meeting with the guy in charge to talk about it...

STAN: Do you like it?

JIM: Yeah, it's a good start. I think it's the first draft.

STAN: (Looks at movie poster painting) Great picture. A great feeling. That makes it look really adult. Yeah, I love that type. Anyway, on Saturday morning, we have, of course **SPIDER-MAN** and **THE HULK.** We hope to have a few more. We're in the process of developing **DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS** for one of the networks, plus a few other shows. But again, we never know until the season is ready to start, what they might buy and what they might not. And Jim is involved with — you probably would rather tell it yourself about **George Romero.**

JIM: Well, the people from Laurel Productions, which is George Romero's company, got together with some of the people from Marvel and, through a series of meetings sort of evolved a joing project where we're going to publish comics and they're going to create a movie. As it worked out George Romero and I co-created the character, who's going to be featured in the movie, and also, together, we wrote the treatment for the movie, *and* possibly George Romero and I are going to work on the screenplay together. I think that's the plan at present. I mean, it's not done yet, so I can't say it's a fact, but that's what everyone intends. I can't wait to get started. We've already done the treatment, and we're doing character designs and so forth right now.

STAN: I just want to mention that, as far as the *number* of movie plans we

have another dozen projects which we're working on. I don't want the readers to think we're limited to just those few movies.

MA: *Okay.*

STAN: Not all of them are contractually definite yet, however.

MA: *Give us some idea what's in the works with that clear understanding, then.*

STAN: There's **THE DAZZLER,** being scripted, there's **SPIDER-MAN** with **Roger Corman** producing. We have **THE BLACK WIDOW** being developed.

MA: *These are all for live action?*

STAN: Yes, for live action. **DR. STRANGE** is also being developed, and so is **DAREDEVIL. CAPTAIN AMERICA** is being prepared as a Broadway Show. Now, at any moment when I go back to the coast I may hear that **DR. STRANGE** was sold and another one is in the works. Things change from day to day. But we have a lot of our characters being worked on and developed right now. Almost every studio has one of our projects in some stage of development.

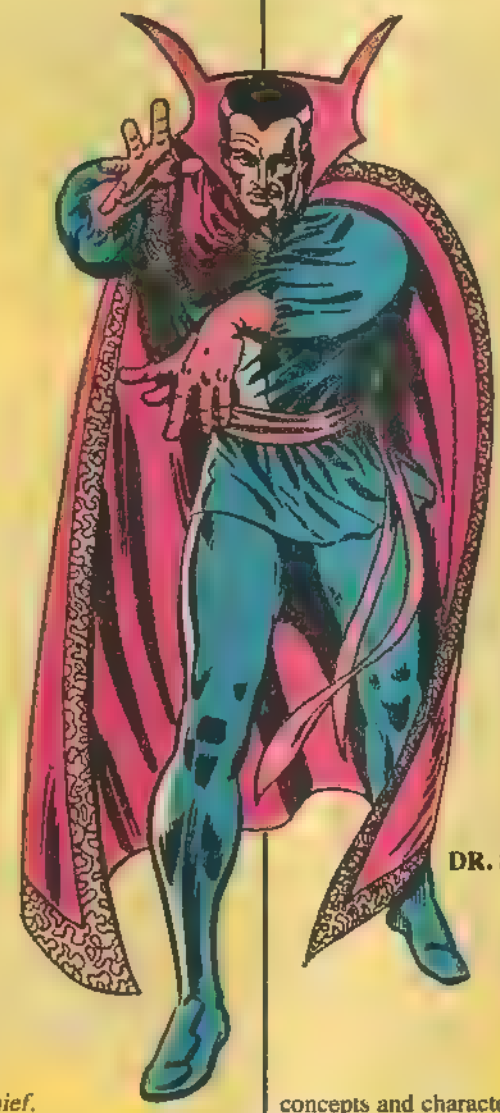
MA: *And part of your job is to make sure that these treatments remain faithful, or as faithful as possible to the original Marvel characters.*

STAN: That's part of my job. But, in all honesty, it is not an easy thing to do. There comes a time when we have to say we either want to sell the movie or not, and unless it's changed to a certain degree the studios will not produce the feature. Then I've got to determine, it is all right to change it that much? It still won't be exactly the same as our comic book, but at least it will get on the screen and be seen by millions. Remember **DR. STRANGE** a few years ago on CBS. If you saw **DR. STRANGE** on television, it wasn't quite our **DR. STRANGE.**

MA: *No, it wasn't.*

STAN: But it was an intelligent version. I have realized, in the couple of years that I have been on the coast, there is no way anybody is going to do the movie exactly like the comic strip. But you hope you can keep the same feeling, and the same integrity.

MA: *What problems do you Jim, think that you've faced that Stan never had to face when he was*



DR. STRANGE

Editor-in-Chief.

JIM: Well from my point of view, every Editor-in-Chief who's been in this job — and there's been seven of us — has had some big problems come up that no one ever faced before. Having been here five years, which is longer than everyone else except Stan, I've had a *lot* of big problems that no one ever faced before. I've had a new kind of competion developing. New problems with, oh, having to change our whole distribution from being strictly newsstand to newsstand and direct sales. Artists and writers have become a lot more concerned over having the opportunity to do things besides **SPIDER-MAN.** I've still got people standing in line to draw **SPIDER-MAN,** but a lot want to do their own concepts and characters, which they create. I'm glad to say that we've evolved a marketplace big enough to handle that kind of material. Ten years ago, there wasn't a place to sell those things. We created a place to sell new, offbeat creator-owned material — the direct comics shops — and now we can publish them. Of course, we had to create new policies and mechanisms for doing those. Anyway, as each thing comes up, we've found a way to deal with it. But there's always something new. I don't expect any year to be a quiet year, something is going to come up that we have to face. A problem right now is that there is a Fan Press — a lot of people out making fan magazines, and they actually have become very slick and sophisticated

What's wrong with this picture?

magazines. In order to generate more business to try and sell copies, many of them try to play up controversies and so forth. So we have a situation where everything we do is under a magnifying glass and people are *trying* to tear us down in print in a sensationalistic way, so they can cash in. Why us? Because we're number one. And the person who's number one is always the one who's the target. It's a whole new world. I guess it would be like being a Hollywood star and finding articles in the **National Enquirer** about how you beat your wife or torture your dog or something like that. It may not be true but it's there in print and it's something you sort of have to live with. But, that's the job. If there weren't problems they wouldn't need me.

MA: *Did you ever think Stan, back in the days of* ***FANTASTIC FOUR #1*** *that Marvel was going to be number one?*

STAN: Well, when you're working in an outfit you always hope it will happen. As a matter of fact we became number one somewhere in the mid-sixties. We started outselling DC at that time. After the first year, when I began to see the fan mail roll in, and I began to get the reaction of the readers, I think I had a pretty damn good feeling that we were on the way up. I've got to admit that the way that things turned out, the way the business is now, the way Marvel is now, it's absolutely like the realization of a dream. I can't tell you how gratifying it is to me. I've said this a million times to different people, but when I started in this business it was almost an embarrassment. I'd go to a party with my wife and people would come over and say "what are you doing?" I'd say I write comics and they would walk away. Didn't even want to talk to me. I used to try and fake it. I'd say I'm a writer. Then they would say what do you write. I'd say I write for magazines. What magazines? At some point I would have to say comic books and I lost my audience.

Right now I think comic books have a tremendous glamor. I'd say 90% of this new glamor was caused by Marvel Comics. Nobody ever dreamed twenty-five years ago that there would be fan magazines of the quality Jim mentioned, that there would be a whole Fan Press, or that there would be a network of book stores just devoted to comics. It's become a whole subculture. Comic books are now a very important part of the media, and I think we've just scratched the surface. In fact, considering what Jim Shooter is doing, what Jim Galton is doing, and the direction that this company is taking, I think if you were to do this interview five years from now, it would be a whole different ball game. I think we'll be closer to Random House than we are to DC. I think we're going to become a full-line publisher. We're already in the movie business and the television business, as well as the magazine publishing business.

MA: *We're the third-largest magazine publisher in the country.*

STAN: The nice thing is, as far as I can see it, quality is still the prime objective. Even though I don't read the books as carefully as I'd like to, I still look at them eagerly, and I see as much attention to detail, as much or more attention to quality as I can remember in years. I think if we can keep going the way we are, and brother Shooter doesn't get careless, which I know he won't, we're going to be the biggest name in entertainment, and not just because we're getting bigger and bigger; but because we're getting better and better — because we've never forgotten — it's quality that counts!

JIM: Amen.

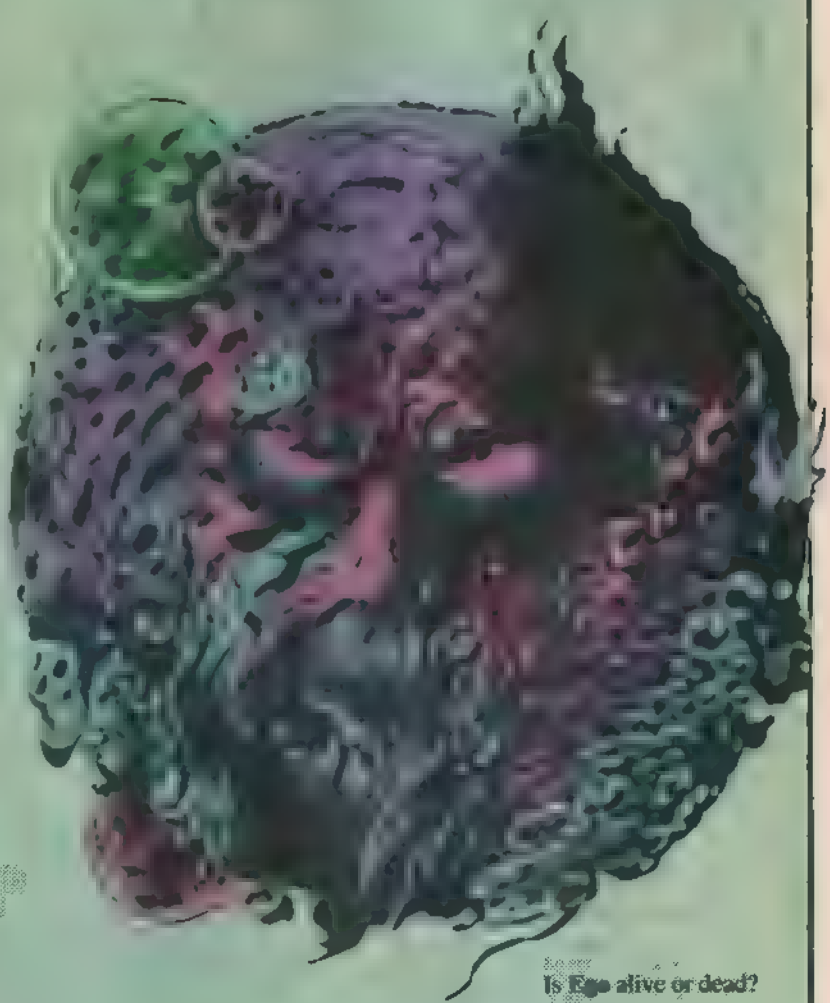
STAN: Excelsior!

THE MARVEL UNIVERSE EXPANDED!

By Mark Lewis

For those of you who thought that you'd know everything there is to know about the Marvel Universe in only twelve volumes — you were wrong! Three *extra* issues of the complete guide to all that happens in the mighty world of Marvel will be appearing this autumn, compiled and edited by the same team that brought you Books 1 through 12, under the able [illegible] Mark Gruenwald.

[illegible]ing out in time for Halloween in [illegible] will catalog the dead and inactive characters that have populated the Marvel mythos over the years. Said Editor Mark Gruenwald, "We're producing these issues entirely to meet reader demand. Originally conceived as an encyclopedia of only those characters who are still running around active in the Marvel Universe, The Official Handbook received so much mail asking for entries on dead and disabled characters, that we're publishing these two extra issues. In fact, we thought originally that we could take care of such characters in one volume. But when we received mail asking for **Captain Marvel, the Black Knight, all the Green Goblins, Morbius, Nighthawk** the list became too long to cover in only one book. Rest assured, we're not leaving anybody out!" Part I of "The Book of the Dead" will be on sale the last week of October. Part II of the "Book of the Dead" will follow *two weeks* later in the Direct Sales



Is Ego alive or dead?

Two former X-Men

market. Regular newsstands will carry Part II the normal full month after Part I. Just so you don't get *too* confused, Part I will be issue #13, and Part II will be issue #14, following the normal sequence of the title.

But there's still more. After all the *characters* have been taken care of, **THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE** will devote an entire issue to *weapons*. This will be a complete technical manual, describing in full scientific detail the structure and functioning of all the mixed-up machinery that our heroes and villains have been toting around. Full of diagrams and explanations, the Book of Weapons is largely the work of Marvel Universe's technical expert and draughtsman **Eliot R. Brown**. Eliot calls upon his vast storehouse of information to render everything from a step-by-step guide to **Moon Knight's** truncheon to the definitive cross-section of **Iron Man's** suit of armor!

"The Weapons book was our own little project," explains Mark, "because *we* were always interested in figuring out how all that stuff works. This one was our own little baby, and we figure that no Marvel completist would want to be without it."

And when all has been said and done, all fifteen volumes of **THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE** should provide the last word in settling arguments, the final source authority for all questions, and an invaluable reference guide for the serious comic historian.

By the way, it makes for some fun reading, too! ●

GOLDEN AGE GREATS, REVISTED

by Warren Reece

Recently a special reprint of the classic **AVENGERS** entanglement in the **KREE-SKRULL WAR** was published. A much-talked-about highlight was **Rick Jones's** psychic re-creation of the original **Human Torch, Vision, Angel** and our own Marvel Age **Sub-Mariner** and **Captain America** as they were in their early years. Add a conjuring of **the Patriot, Blazing Skull,** and **Fin,** and you've got yourself a flash of greatness from the "Golden Age"; that is, the period of Marvel history spanning 1939 til 1949, as far as *comics* go. Here's a little background material on these champions from yesteryear!

by John Byrne and Jack Abel

The *original* **Human Torch** was introduced in **MARVEL COMICS #1**, in October 1939. He was not "human" biologically, but rather, the world's first known *android*, or synthetic human being. He was the masterwork of a scientist, known alternately as **Professor Albert** (or **Phineas Horton**). In his attempt to create a replica of a normal man, **Horton** miscalculated somehow, resulting in an activated creation that blazed uncontrollably when in the presence of oxygen. Amazingly, the android was not consumed in the volatile reaction, indicating the probability of his being a *catalyst*, constantly regenerating himself in the flaming process.

Horton revealed his creation to the world through a press conference, displaying him in a vacuum bell jar which prevented flaming disaster. For demonstration purposes, he allowed a small amount of oxygen to reach the android, activating **the Torch** and his flaming power for mere moments. Admonished to destroy his "monsterous" creation, **Horton** compromised by imprisoning **the Torch** in an airless steel and concrete tomb, until a "cure" could be found.

However, several months later, a tiny air leak enabled **the Torch** to blast free, causing blazing panic until he accidentally discovered that nitrogen, combining with his synthetic makeup, enabled him to control his flame. During his accidental rampage, though, he was temporarily framed by a gangster named **Sardo**. Flaming vengeance ensued, along with a vow never again to be used for selfish gain or crime.

In the first few months of his career, **Torch** was something of an outlaw, but by May, 1940, he became a member of the N.Y. Police Department, aided by his undercover cop pal, **Johnson**. Still later, as many of us know, he became a member of **the Invaders**, and **the All Winners Squad**, although his personal ally was **Toro, the Flaming Kid**; a boy **Torch** discovered in the fall of 1940.

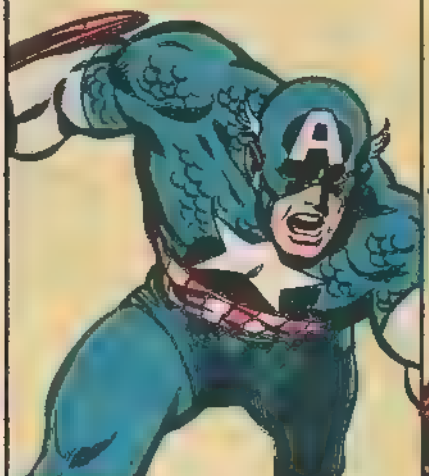
Torch's elemental enemy, and later ally, **Prince Namor, The Sub-Mariner**, also debuted in **MARVEL COMICS #1**. **Namor**, whose name means "avenging son," was born around 1921. His mother, **Princess Fen**, a leader of an Antartic undersea race, was sent to spy upon an American ship, whose crew, bombing their way out of an ice field, was inadvertently destroying **Fen's** city and people. She fell in love with the S.S. Oracle's commander, **Captain Leonard McKenzie**, later marrying him, and, after readying her people, the **Sub-Mariners**, for a great counter attack, she remained in the sea. Her people, not heeding her warning of the armed might of the Americans, were slaughtered in droves. Hence, when her child was born, she raised him to the task of *avenging* the **Sub-Mariners**; thus his name, **Namor**.

Namor, perhaps the first *mutant* of modern times, was also a *hybrid*. In addition to being able to breathe air or water indefinetely, as he grew to maturity his ankles sprouted small, powerful wings. As for his strength, at its water-refreshed peak, it equalled that of a thousand men. Thus, able to swim, fly, resist small-arms fire with his incredibly tough integument, and powered like fury itself, by the age of 19, he was ready **to avenge the Sub-Mariners** in full.

Namor came to New York late in 1939, where he proceded on a wreaking spree, which he halted twice to save a girl, and abandoned for the sake of his later friend and ally, **Officer Betty Dean**. She convinced him to become a Nazi fighter, but he returned to his war against Americans when he was double-crossed after a trial he had agreed to in order to clear his name of previous criminal violence, as Americans saw it. However, a seat in the electric chair merely revived his strength, and after returning briefly to the sea, spearheaded a war on humanity. Only the combined efforts of the police, army, and **the Human Torch**, coupled with a plea from **Betty Dean**, stopped his rampage. The "fire versus water" battle between **Torch** and **Namor** was a major event; perhaps the first of its kind. Who would've thought that these two elemental opposites would eventually become allies against the Axis menace?

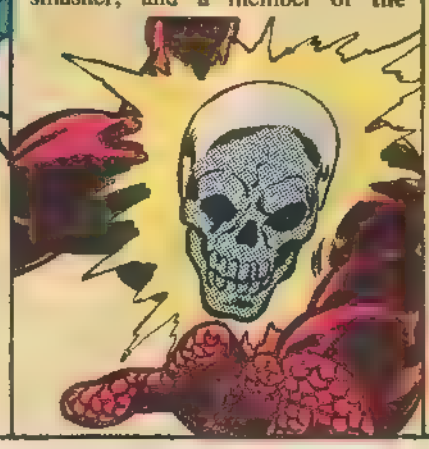
The *original* **Angel**, also introduced in **MARVEL COMICS #1**, was a costumed hero of no apparent super power, but was nevertheless an extremely powerful, agile, and dashing man. His costume consisted of a form fitting blue outfit with golden angel wings emblazoned on the chest, and a red cape. His real name was **Tom Hallaway**, and he was handsome, brown haired, sported a moustache, and wore no mask. The son of a prison warden, he was nicknamed **Angel** when, as a lad, he saved an innocent man from electrocution. Tales of the underworld, told to him by convicts, inspired him to undertake a secret campaign against the dark forces that the law couldn't, or wouldn't touch, and from 1939 to 1949, he encountered a fantastic array of costumed cultists, ghouls, giants, and other abductors of innocent beauties.

The *original* **Vision** was introduced in **MARVEL MYSTERY** #13, in November 1940. His name was **Aarkus, Destroyer of Evil**: a kind of cosmic policeman, from the **Smoke World**, who entered our dimension primarily through the medium of smoke, but also, on two occasions, with the aid of scientific efforts provided by **Markham Ericsohn**, and **Professor Enoch Mason**. A tall, bald, costumed figure, he had great strength and agility, powers of astral projection and mind control, the ability to attain human form, and to create a huge projection of his face. Generally, only those approaching death could see him in his true form as **the Vision**, and his transformations or transdimensional crossings, depended on the presence of smoke or vapors greatly



As for **Captain America**, who first appeared in **CAPTAIN AMERICA** #1, in March 1941, few are unfamiliar with the heroism of 4-F Army reject **Steve Rogers**, who was the first (and last) guinea pig for "Operation Rebirth." He received a potent endocrine injection from its creator, **Professor Reinstein**, which transformed **Roger's** every muscle, sense, and organ into a sum of superhuman perfection. Ironically, this first of a projected army of super agents against Fifth Columnists saw his benefactor shot right in the lab, and, killing the assasin by accident, avenged both **Reinstein** and the doomed project. Undergoing rigorous training, and given a secret costumed identity by the U.S. High Command, he became **Captain America**, but he maintained the everyday identity of **Private Steve Rogers**. When orphaned pal and camp mascot **Bucky Barnes** accidentally discovered his secret, **Cap** trained the lad to become his partner. Together, til **Cap's** suspension of animation, and **Bucky's** death, in 1945, they tackled the most incredible horde of spies and gothic horror villains, epitomized by the dreaded **Red Skull.**

The **Patriot**, introduced in **HUMAN TORCH** #3, in the Spring of 1941, was **Jeff Mace**, a reporter. In his costumed, non-super-powered identity, he became another spy smasher, and a member of **the Liberty Legion.** However, he later became a replacement **Captain America**, when his idol disappeared in 1945.



The Blazing Skull, who debuted in **MYSTIC COMICS** #5, in March, 1941, was really **Mark Todd.** He had no super powers, but, possessed of a cloaked costume, and a skull mask that displayed a terrifying glow, he used his fighting ability and pilot's skill to fight for the British against the Nazis.

As for the Fin, introduced in **DARING MYSTERY** #7, in April 1940, he was **Lt. Peter Noble**, lone survivor of a submarine wreck near an air-filled, cavernous kingdom called Neptunia. Within its luminous confines, he encountered a winged group of fish people. Shooting their leader, **Ikor**, and another Neptunian in self defense, he was thought to be the reincarnation of their ancestor: **the Fin**. From the sub's wreck, he retrieved portions of an old masquerade costume, a souvenier shark's fin, a knife, and a pair of aviator's goggles. Devising a costume from these things, he resolved to fit the legend of these fish-people, and thus became **the Fin**, Master of Neptunia.

Cap, Namor, Torch, and **Angel**, had long and illustrious careers. Many of the other Golden Age heroes had rather short, relatively unknown ones. While it's unfortunate that the windows to the Golden Age are open to relatively few comics fans, you will get a glimpse in **THE AVENGERS** reprint; and who knows? Maybe some '30s and '40s reprints of lost classics will follow! ●

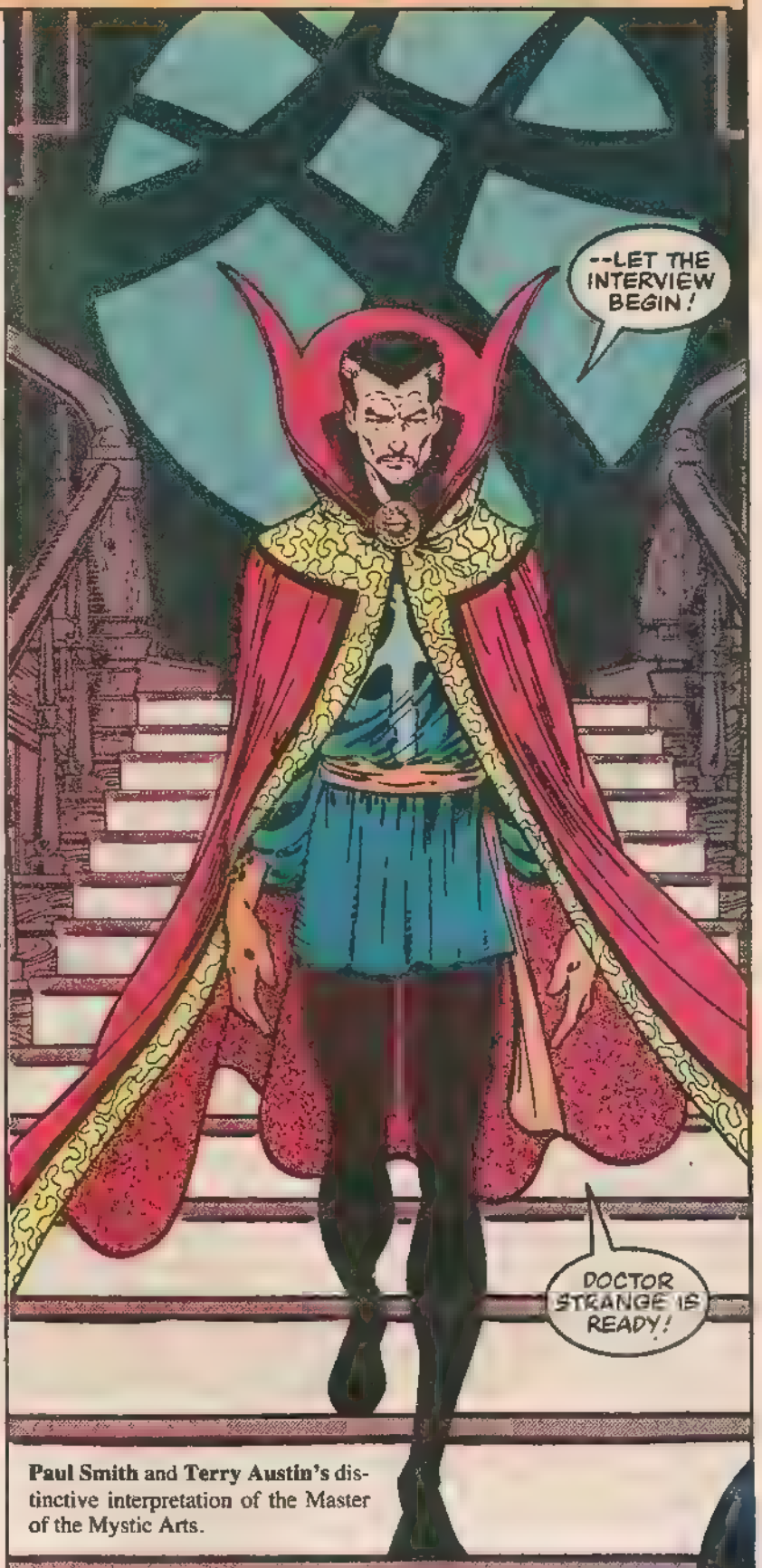
A Tale of Two Artists by Robert Sodaro and Mark Lerer

Take two artists. The first, one of the hottest new kids on the block. The second, though he has been involved with comics for several years, could also be considered a new-comer. Add two distictly different titles, one, a top-selling book in the Marvel stable, the other, a title with a strong enough fan following to survive several deaths and resurrections. Sprinkle in a small amount of intrigue, add a dash of mysticism, throw in just a touch of science fiction. Now liberally season with two full sets of interesting and exciting characters, and then, just to make it right, fold in the stuff that dreams are made of. Mix well. You'll wind up with the most publicized move at Marvel this year.

All of the hoopla, of course, is about **Paul Smith's** move to **DR. STRANGE**, with **John Romita, Jr.** picking up the penciling on **X-MEN**. For Paul, the chance to draw **DR. STRANGE** is a dream come true. For J.R. Jr., the **X-MEN** will be an incredible opportunity to strut his stuff.

The brief, but impressive, career of **Paul Michael Smith** has shown a rise that is nothing short of meteoric. He's only been in comics for just over a year, and already his name is a household word. He has become as well know "overnight" as **John Byrne** by penciling the number one fan favorite, **THE X-MEN**.

Paul is almost completely self-taught. He attended college, but grew tired of taking courses he couldn't see the point of, and left after two years. In 1977, he took a job with animator **Ralph Bakshi**, working on such films as *Lord of the Rings* and *American Pop*. In animation Paul received his most rigorous artistic training, having to constantly draw a given set of characters over and over. Except for a short side trip to Europe, Paul went straight from animation work to Marvel Comics. His earliest work for Marvel appeared in **MARVEL FANFARE** #1 and #4, issue #4 containing his first **X-MEN** story. From there, Paul drew **IRON MAN** #159 and **DR. STRANGE**#56. He was offered **the X-Men** when **Dave**



Paul Smith and **Terry Austin's** distinctive interpretation of the Master of the Mystic Arts.

HEY, PUN'KIN. WHAT'RE YA DOIN' OVER THERE, WITH CHUCK...
... WHEN YA SHOULD BE OVER HERE, WITH US!
SPEAKIN' O' THE KID, SHE LOOKS PRETTY OUT OF IT. AIN'T HARDLY SURPRISIN'-- SHE'S SHY. SHE DOESN'T KNOW WHERE SHE STANDS YET-- APART FROM THE X-MEN OR A PART OF IT. THAT'S A REAL LONELY PLACE TA BE.
YOU'RE AN X-MAN, AIN'T'CHA?
Huh? AM I?
I MEAN, I GUESS I, I MEAN I SUPPOSE.. I...
WOW!
SHE'S A NICE KID, BUT FER A GENIUS-- REAL SLOW ON THE UPTAKE, Y'KNOW?
HER TROUBLE, WOLVERINE, IS THAT, UNLIKE YOU, SHE SPEAKS ENGLISH.
WHAT A CUT! SCORE ONE FOR THE BIG GUY!
MADNESS, UTTER MADNESS. IT'S WONDERFUL.
YOUR STUDENTS HAVE A RIGHT TO CELEBRATE, CHARLES. IN MARGALI'S FACSIMILE HELL, THEY FACED THE ULTIMATE IN DESPAIR, AND EMERGED TRIUMPHANT.
PETER'S WONDERFUL.
THEY ARE HEROES.
THEY, MY DEAR STEPHEN, ARE THE X-MEN.
End

Here's a sample of **John Romita, Jr.'s version of mighty Marvels merry mutant-squad, inked by Bob McLeod**, from **X-MEN ANNUAL #3.**

Cockrum left the book to work on his **FUTURIANS** graphic novel.

Paul at first hesitated: "I never grew up thinking, 'boy, it would be neat to draw the **the X-Men**' but I always did think, 'boy, wouldn't it be neat to draw **Dr. Strange**!'" After giving it some thought, Paul decided that since he had come to New York intending to make a name for himself, he would gladly take over Marvel's most popular title! He intended to pencil **THE X-MEN** for only a year, and much to his surprise and joy, one year later, **DR. STRANGE** opened up for him. So, with the conclusion of the current **X-MEN** plotline in #175, Paul will take his leave of the merry mutants, and hitch up with the good doctor.

What else does the future hold for Paul? Certainly not one to rest on his laurels, Paul will be penciling several short stories for **MARVEL FANFARE**. Included in this prospective inventory are a **Kid Colt** story and an adventure starring **The Vision**. He's also been discussing with **Archie Goodwin** the possibility of doing some work for **EPIC ILLUSTRATED** and the Epic Comics Line. Likely to prove the most exciting project will be a **DR. STRANGE/DR. DOOM Graphic Novel**, to be scripted by regular **DR. STRANGE** writer **Roger Stern**. Paul will begin work on it in December, so it will be out sometime next year.

John Romita, Jr., who became known for his work with **David Michelinie** and **Bob Layton** on **IRON MAN**, is most celebrated for his current penciling on **THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN**. Taking over **THE X-MEN** while continuing to pencil **SPIDER-MAN**, John finds himself in a unique

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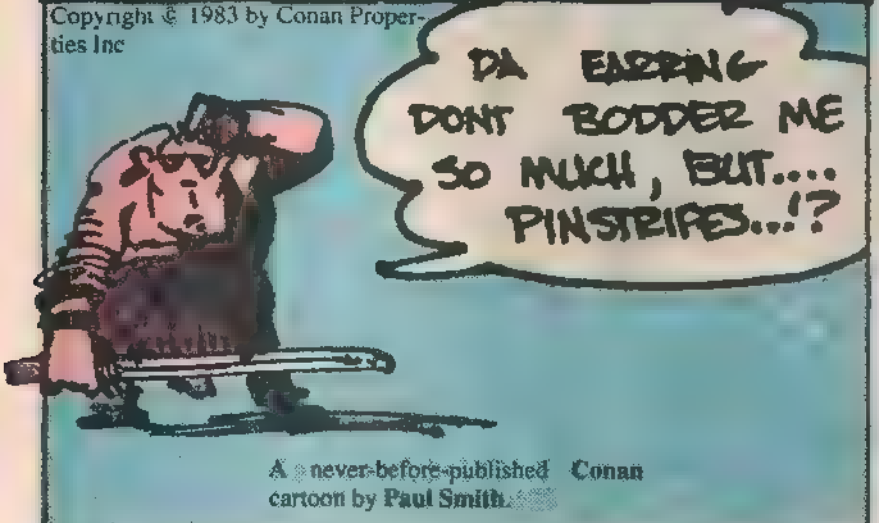


A never-before-published **Conan** cartoon by **Paul Smith.**

position. He faces the double challenge of following in the footsteps of **John Byrne, Dave Cockrum,** and **Paul Smith** on **THE X-MEN,** while also drawing a book which his talented father helped make famous!

"I cannot compete with my father, and if I have to, I'll quit!" But J.R. Jr.'s work on **SPIDER-MAN** has shown that he is more than **John Romita's** son – his individual penciling on **Peter Parker's** alter ego has made everybody sit up and take notice. As for his going over to **THE X-MEN,** J.R. Jr. admits that there will be a big jump from the styles of Byrne, Cockrum, and Smith to his, and even he cannot wait to see what the book will look like under his artistic control! John, Jr. always had the utmost respect for **THE X-MEN** artists who preceded him, and now that he has actually begun working on that book, that respect has grown into absolute awe.

John explained that because **THE X-MEN** is not only a group book but a science fiction book as well, it'll be much different from the streetwise action of **SPIDER-MAN.** While John intends to use Paul Smith's work on **THE X-MEN** as a model, he's certain to make his own, distinctive mark on the series.

John's artistic training is a bit more formal than Paul's. John grew up around the Marvel Bullpen, taught by some of the best artists in the business. His instructors included **Marie Severin, John Buscema,** and of course his father. John's earliest work for Marvel were cover sketches and splash pages for Marvel's British Department. He spent about three years in Marvel's production department altogether, doing art corrections and acting as art director for **SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN.**

With this sort of training behind him, and two important books like **SPIDER-MAN** and **THE X-MEN** in the present, John Romita, Jr.'s future looks bright indeed. To some, working on two monthly titles of such high caliber might be a chore, but John is eagerly looking forward to the challenge. If he ever gets the time, John will begin work on a **THING** Graphic Novel, which he hopes his father will ink. After that, perhaps, a **SPIDER-MAN** Graphic Novel.

For now, though, John's got **SPIDER-MAN** and **THE X-MEN,** and the talented Paul Smith is involved with **DR. STRANGE.** We wish both men long and successful runs on all of their titles. ●

THE NEW TALENT DEPARTMENT

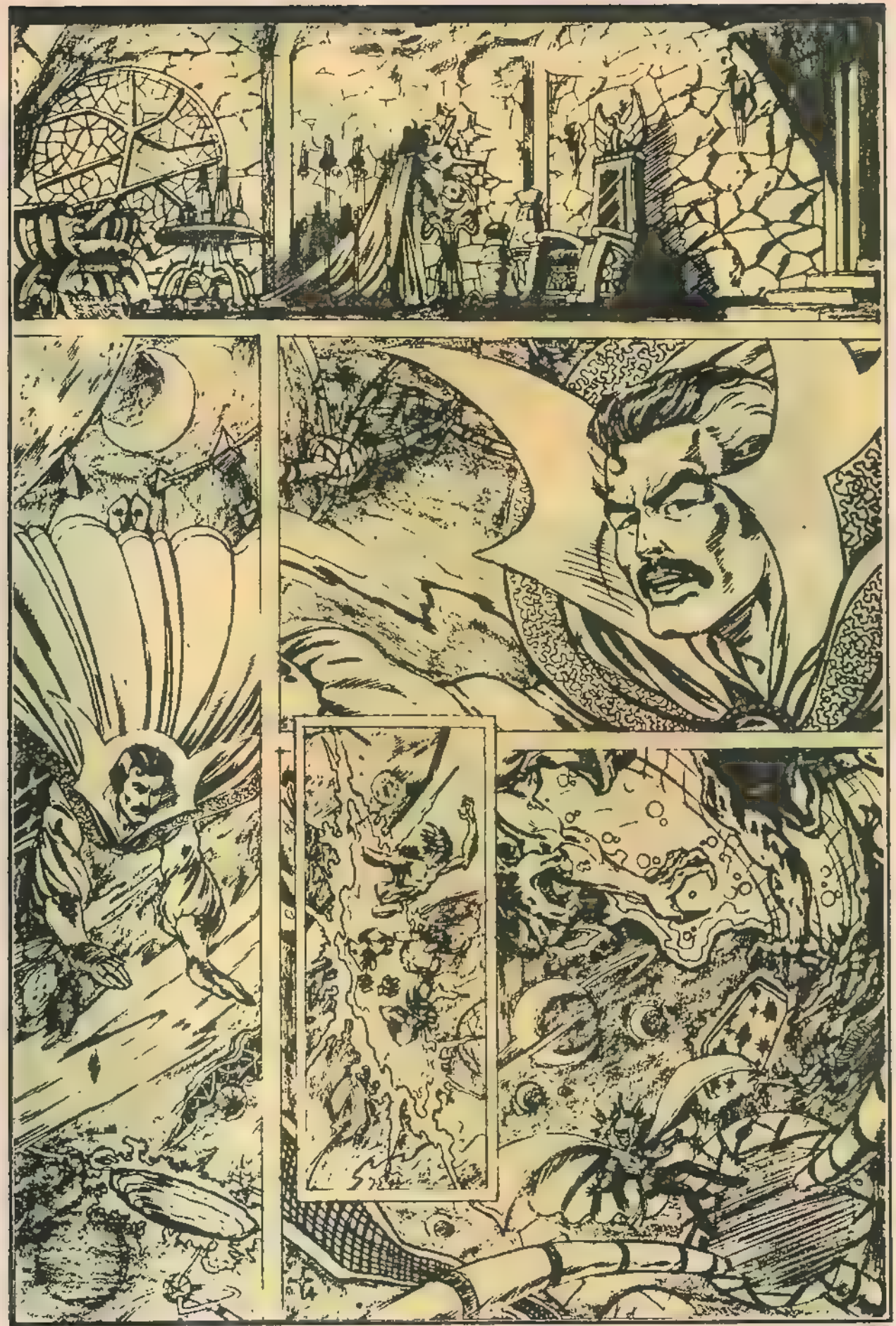
As an editor for Marvel, I'm always on the lookout for promising new talent. But rarely am I as fortunate as I was at a recent comic book convention in Atlanta where I met **Rod Whigham**. His artwork samples impressed me enough to wonder why no one else had discovered this guy yet (actually, others have – Marvel just had some catching up to do). Without a moment's hesitation I asked **Rod** for copies of his work to bring back North with me, and here they are! And if you enjoy his work as much as I do, I'm sure this won't be the last time you'll see **Rod's** artwork in a Marvel magazine!

-- Bob Budiansky

I couldn't agree more with my erstwhile assistant! I think **Rod's** destined for greatness! So without further ado, here's the very talented **Mr. Rod Whigham's** sample pages...

-- Jim Salicrup

Pencils and inks by **Rod Whigham**.



Pencils by **Whigham.**

Pencils by **Whigham** and inks by **Jack Abel**

LETTERS

MARK DUNCAN'S PAGE

Send your letters to MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE c/o Marvel Comics Group, 387 Park Avenue South, New York, New York 10016

Hey, Guys!

I was just reading the latest issue of **MARVEL AGE**, a great magazine – which is typical for Marvel – when I got this thought about a title for your letters page. How about a great big flashy banner proclaiming... "MARK DUNCAN'S PAGE!" What do you think, huh? Like it?

Oh well, (sigh), it was just a thought.

Mark Duncan
Wichita, KS

Sure, Mark, we'll try anything once!

Dear Marvel Age Letters Page,

I would like to know if it's possible to subscribe to the **Marvel Graphic Novels** and the new **Limited Series** that you are coming out with. I have also noticed that the covers from **THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE** fit together to form a giant poster. I would like to know if you will be coming out with a giant size wall poster of this excellent artwork. I'm sure it would be a great success if you did. Make Mine Marvel!

Ross Johnson
Superior, WI

Unfortunately, Ross, we cannot offer subscriptions to the *Marvel Graphic Novels* or our *Limited Series*. That's something we're still working on. As for that poster, it's somewhere between the discussion stage and the planning stage, so sit tight!

Dear **MARVEL AGE** People,

As a long time reader of your fine group of comics, I can't tell you how happy I am that you are going back to the classic Marvel masthead. It always looked so good and was so MARVEL!

By the way, is there any way you could convince **Stan (The Man) Lee** to give us a short soap box? I know that our fearless leader has a lot to do, but one little box for us in **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE** shouldn't be that hard!

David Wellbeloved
Charlottesville, VA

One little box? One little box? How about this issue's full-length interview with Stan *and* Jim Shooter? Who *says* we don't deliver?

Dear **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE**,

I collect nearly all of the Marvel titles, and I've noticed that there's one thing missing, comedy. Sure, there's occasional humor in the regular monthly titles, but that's just not enough for this fan of comedy. Wouldn't a satire of popular comic books be great? A monthly book featuring satirical stories of our favorite super heroes? One month you could do a satire on the **X-Men**, the next, **Spider-Man**, and so on. What do you guys think?

Another thought crossed my mind. Is there any chance of starting a comic book series based on the recent TV shows "Knight Rider" or "The A Team?" Thanks for listening, and keep up the wonderful age known as the Marvel Age.

Tony Anderson
Everett, WA

Hey! We think you've got a terrific idea! In fact, we're coming out with a couple of comedy titles this year – *MARVEL TAILS*, featuring *Peter Porker, the Spectacular Spider-Ham* – and *MARVEL FUMETTIS*, featuring a centerspread of *Stan Lee* nude, both titles are certain to be crazier than your wildest expectations! Anybody out there want to see a regular Marvel satire series – and anybody remember *NOT BRAND ECCH*, our parody mag from the late 1960's?

Dear Marvel Age Staff,

Here are a few mistakes that your poor, overworked proofreader missed. First, in **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE #4**, in the Coming Attractions section, you have **RETURN OF THE JEDI Limited Series #1** listed as having an October cover date, when in **MARVEL AGE #3**, the same issue was listed a having a September cover date. Which is correct? Second mistake: the Coming Attractions in **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE #6** say, "Here's a complete checklist of what's happening in all Marvel titles bearing an October cover date." Shouldn't that have been a December cover date?

Third, same issue and same

section. **FANTASTIC FOUR ANNUAL #6?** Another **F.F. ANNUAL** so soon? And why #6?

Do I get a No-Prize?

Hugo Torres
Bronx, NY

We'll answer you point by point, Hugo:

First, the correct cover date for the first issue of the *RETURN OF THE JEDI Limited Series* is October. Don't miss it. Second, you're right! The Coming Attractions column in MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE should have read "December" cover date. Our goof, and thanks for spotting it! Third, nope! You see, that reference to *F.F. ANNUAL #6*, published in 1968, was a reference to the story that appeared in that annual, which was the basis of *WHAT IF #42*! Lastly, sure, you caught us on a good day – you get your No-Prize!

Dear Jim,

In **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE #6**, the Coming Attractions mentioned that **Paul Smith** is leaving the **X-MEN**. Is he leaving permanently? I hope not. I love how he does the **X-MEN**, especially **Kitty** and **Storm**. There should be a petition or something!

Jonathan Reballedo
Carol City, FL

***Paul Smith* is leaving the *X-MEN*, but he's not leaving Marvel, Jonathan – Paul's going to be drawing *DR. STRANGE* – see the article in this issue for the complete story behind the most talked about artistic move of the year!**

Dear M.A.,

For a long while I thought **Michael Golden** was gone for good, but since I got **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE #6** and saw that he was doing the cover of **U.S. 1 #7**, I have renewed hope! Now just get him on the inside of a comic please.

John Mason
Jamaica Plain, MA

You'll be pleased to know that *Mike Golden* is also doing covers for upcoming *MICRONAUTS* adventures, and penciling a *SPIDER-MAN GRAPHIC NOVEL!*

Dear Jim,

Many thanks for the informative look at **Cloak and Dagger** by **Bill Mantlo**. I've enjoyed all the **Cloak and Dagger** appearances to date, since their first appearance in the classic **PETER PARKER #64**. For a long time I've underestimated **Bill Mantlo's** writing ability. **Cloak and Dagger's** initial appearance was probably his best story, as he said.

I appreciate the scenario Bill wrote about their past, but never let it happen again – before we learn anything more about this duo, at least a year should pass! These two have the advantage of a mysterious past that few other characters have.

I like **Rick Leonardi's** pencils, but I want to see **Ed Hannigan** doing more **Cloak and Dagger** work. Though only three artists – **Mooney, Leonardi,** and **Hannigan** – have worked on **Cloak and Dagger, Ed** will always be the ultimate **C and D** artist.

Oh, by the way, the rest of the issue was great, too!

Richard Harvey
Medford, NJ

Thanks, Rich.

Dear Jim and Mark,

For quite a while now I have listened to debates about **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE**. Is it merely Marvel promoting itself, or is it an honest attempt to give the fans a "behind the scenes" look at the number one comic book company? After six issues, I now offer my opinion: it is both. **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE** is beneficial to us both. By working hard and producing a top notch fanzine you have earned both my quarter and my respect.

Because **MARVEL AGE** belongs to us both, I would like to suggest what I'd like to see each month. There should be a poll question in every issue. Fans should be given the chance to express their views on questions such as: is **THE AVENGERS** the best place for **the She-Hulk**? What Marvel characters are most deserving of their own **Limited Series**? And what Marvel personality should be interviewed in **MARVEL AGE**?

Besides questions like this, fans might be asked to express their opinions on such issues as the role of woment in comics, sex in comics, racism and discrimination, and so forth. These would be topics of a little more depth, a little more thought-provoking than the poll questions. There might not be enough topics logically to do an editorial page. Perhaps that should be a poll question. In closing, I would like to thank you for listening and for starting a magazine that benefits us both so nicely.

Adam Burchess
Durham, NC

We think highly of your suggestions, Adam, and would welcome discussion from thoughtful and intelligent readers like yourself on the whole range of issues relating to comics. As for a readers' poll – we consider *everything* that comes up on this page as part of a poll! What does everyone else think? Yea or nay?

Dear Carol,

Where can I get a copy of "How to Draw Comics in Four Easy Steps?"

Michael Ruffner
Memphis, TN

Well, Mike, there's no way to draw comics in only four steps – but we *do* suggest you pick up a copy of *How to Draw Comics the Marvel Way* at your local bookstore! It's written by *Stan Lee* and illustrated by *John Buscema*, and we think you'll find it more than helpful.

Dear Carol,

By now you've received many suggestions for the name of your letters page, but just for the record, my vote is for Marvel Adages!

Thanks for doing what you do.

Andre Jewett
Jackson, MS

...and Editor *Jim Salicrup* still hasn't chosen the final official title for the *MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE* letters column! If you haven't voted yet, grab a copy of the ballot we printed last issue, and send your suggestion in!

Till next month – face front! ●

AT LAST! THE LIMITED SERIES *YOU* DEMANDED!

CLOAK AND DAGGER

COLLECT ALL *FOUR* ISSUES! YOU'LL BE GLAD YOU DID!

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